

# **Delivering travel plans through the planning process**

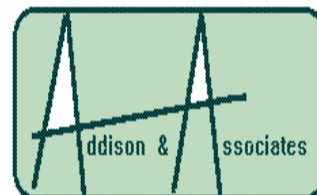
*Research report*

for

**Department for Transport  
and  
Communities and Local Government**

**Addison & Associates**

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## ***Delivering travel plans through the planning process***

### ***Research Report***

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

- 1.1 In January 2007 The Department for Transport commissioned Addison & Associates to update the previously published guidance on travel plans and the planning process, namely: *Using the planning process to secure travel plans: Best practice guidance for local authorities, developers and occupiers*, ODPM/DfT July 2002, and Department for Transport: *Making residential travel plans work: Guidelines for new development*. DfT, 2005. This report is one of three documents that have arisen out of this review: *Delivering travel plans through the planning process – good practice guidelines*; the summary report of the guidelines; and this research report.
- 1.2 This research report has been prepared based on information collected during the first six months of 2007. The research included:
  - A desk top review
  - A nationally circulated questionnaire
  - A review of the case studies from the original research in 2001 and 2004
  - An evaluation of new case studies
  - An assessment of new methodologies for the evaluation of travel plans
  - A brainstorming meeting on the initial draft of the best practice guidelines with attendees from central government departments, local authorities, consultancies and the development sector.
- 1.3 It pulls together relevant key messages from the desk top research which included a review of new research that has informed the new *Good practice guidelines* as well as a review of the relevant government policy and guidance; the responses to the national questionnaire on travel plans; and the evaluation of ten local authority case studies plus a case study from the Highways Agency. It focuses on areas that underpin and amplify on issues that have been addressed in the updated *Good practice guidelines* along with potentially useful mechanisms and techniques that are evolving as part of the travel planning “tool kit”.
- 1.4 The research report should be read in conjunction with the main report which includes the conclusions of the research. This report is to provide the background to the published guidelines.
- 1.5 The study has been prepared under the guidance of a steering group appointed by the Department for Transport representing relevant organisations. Members of the steering group are listed in the acknowledgements.

## Chapter 2: The “state of the art” in travel planning

2.1 This chapter is divided into three parts:

- A. Developments in travel planning since the previous Guidance.**

Since the 2002 and 2004 Travel Plan Guidance documents were published the development of travel plans has moved on substantially in some places and the knowledge of it as a tool has broadened. However, progress has varied between different types of travel plans and different authorities. Research into the way travel plans are being supported, facilitated and secured was reviewed to help focus the new research to underpin the new guidelines. The review covers all travel plans in relation to the planning process i.e. workplace, school, residential and visitor travel plans. It also includes the key outcomes from the national survey undertaken: the more detailed analysis is in chapter 6.
- B. Travel plan effectiveness**

There has also been a substantial amount of research that has looked at the impact of travel planning on commuting and car use and considered the likely success factors that influence the level of impact. The research for workplace, school, residential and visitor travel plans is reviewed.
- C. Innovative Features**

Since the previous guidance was published the development of car clubs and use of personalised travel planning has become more widespread. Studies of these approaches and their role in travel planning are reviewed.

### **A. *Developments in travel plans since the previous Guidance***

2.2 The Government’s support for school travel plans, workplace travel plans and also for personalised travel planning has been reinforced: it is reiterated in the 2004 Future of Transport White Paper<sup>1</sup>, which promises to promote all three. National guidance on the second round of Local Transport Plans (LTP), also published in 2004<sup>2</sup>, points to evidence emerging from research into Smarter Choices<sup>3</sup> on the impact on traffic of ‘smart interventions’. A good LTP, says the guidance, should make full use of the growing evidence base on what works, in particular *“by exploring the potential of programmes and schemes which change behaviours and thereby manage demand for transport services”*. Such interventions are recommended in the context of the Shared Priorities set by the guidance - congestion, accessibility, road safety and air quality, together with other quality of life outcomes such as health and liveability and the quality of the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030*, Department for Transport, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> *Guidance on full local transport plans*, Department for Transport, 2004

<sup>3</sup> *Smarter Choices – Changing the Way We Travel, final report of the research project ‘The influence of soft factor interventions on travel demand’*, Sally Cairns, Lynn Sloman, Carey Newson, Jillian Anable, Alistair Kirkbride and Phil Goodwin, Department for Transport, July 2004

environment. Government policy has therefore increased the weight it is giving to travel planning and changing behaviour.

## Workplace travel plans

- 2.3 Government support for employer travel plans has varied over time, with some key early initiatives subsequently discontinued. The Government's programme of free site-specific advice, which was launched in 1999 for both school and workplace travel plans, is now no longer available. Between April 2001 and March 2004, grants for local authority workplace (and school) travel advisers were provided through ring-fenced funding from a Government bursary scheme, but those for workplace advisers were not renewed. Several tax breaks for travel plan measures were introduced in 1999 with further changes in 2002, but there have been no subsequent reforms.
- 2.4 However, workplace travel planning has been an important component of work in the three 'sustainable travel demonstration towns', awarded £10m over five years in 2004, and has also been allocated substantial resources by Transport for London, which budgeted over £5m for workplace travel planning in 2007/08. In addition, the Department for Transport has recently published new guidance<sup>4</sup> on travel plans and initiated the National Business Travel Network (NBTN), a business-to-business network which enables companies to share best practice and promote the business case for travel plans and Smarter Choices. The work of the NBTN complements that of ACT TravelWise, a membership association of large public and private sector employers, which provides support and information to organisations on implementing effective travel plans, as well as news, contacts and services. ACT merged with Travelwise on the 1 January 2008 with the aim of strengthening all aspects of promoting use of sustainable transport.
- 2.5 The issue of workplace travel plan coverage is discussed in the Smarter Choices study (Cairns et al, 2004)<sup>5</sup>: The researchers estimated, on the basis of Department for Transport figures supplied to the project about local authority expectations, that by 2006 around 3,600 employers would have implemented travel plans in England, accounting for around 11% of larger workplaces.
- 2.6 In the more recent review of second round Local Transport Plans prepared for the Department for Transport<sup>6</sup>, 64.6% of LTPs reviewed made a reasonable or significant reference to workplace travel plans, and all of the LTPs included some reference to workplace travel plans.

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<sup>4</sup> The Essential Guide to Travel Planning, written by Ian Taylor and edited by Carey Newson, Transport for Quality of Life and the National Business Travel Network, Department for Transport, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> *Smarter Choices – Changing the Way We Travel, final report of the research project 'The influence of soft factor interventions on travel demand'*, Department for Transport, July 2004

<sup>6</sup> *Review of the Take-Up of Smarter Choices in Local Transport Plans – Initial Findings from a Review of LTPs*, prepared by the Operational Research Unit for the Sustainable Travel Initiatives Branch, Department for Transport, January 2007

## ***Workplace travel plans and the planning process***

- 2.7 The *Smarter Choices* study also looked specifically at the way in which seven case study local authorities were using the planning system in relation to workplace travel planning. It found that, while all the case study local authorities were doing this, the approach taken was very different in different locations.
- In **Bristol, Buckinghamshire** and **Merseyside** the approach was relatively informal, although Merseyside was in the process of drawing up supplementary planning guidance following concerns about streamlining travel planning with regeneration work.
  - **Birmingham** and **Nottingham** both had guidelines on the use of planning conditions. In Nottingham, all proposals for new developments with more than 50 parking spaces were being referred to the travel plans officer for consideration, but there was nevertheless a preference for voluntary travel plans rather than ones secured through the planning system. In Birmingham, all proposed developments with more than 50 employees were required to join Company Travelwise. In **Cambridgeshire** guidelines on developer contributions included a fixed fee per trip generated with the amount depending on the location.
  - The most extensive use of the planning system was in **York** where the travel plan officer scrutinised all planning applications and advised on the inclusion of travel plan initiatives in planning conditions, spending perhaps 10% of her time on enforcement and other issues related to old planning permissions.

## ***School travel plans***

- 2.8 Government initiatives to support school travel planning have expanded consistently since the 1998 Transport White Paper. The Government target – stated in the 2003 travelling to school action plan<sup>7</sup>, is that all schools in England should have travel plans by the end of the decade, with an interim target that by March 2006 around 10,000 school travel plans will be complete. The action plan, a strategy shared by the then Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Transport, allocated £7.5 million a year for at least two years (2004-05 and 2005-06) to fund an expansion in local authority based school travel advisers, and regional advisers were also appointed.
- 2.9 In addition, DfES provided up to £20m a year (originally until 2005 but now extended to 2008) to provide small capital grants to schools with an approved school travel plan. In June 2004, over 2,300 schools with approved travel plans received small capital grants totalling almost £14m in the first round of payments<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> *Travelling to School: an action plan*, Department for Education and Skills, Department for Transport, 2003

<sup>8</sup> GNN Government News Network release 23 March 2005



- 2.10 Funding has also been made available from DfT to extend the National Cycle Network, bringing it closer to schools, with £10m of funding made available to Sustrans in October 2004, with benefits for more than 230 schools.<sup>9</sup>
- 2.11 In November 2006, DfT and DfES announced a new grant scheme to provide funds of up to £1,000 a year for three years for state funded primary schools setting up walking buses, with smaller grants for other walking initiatives such as walking reward schemes. Funds made available for this by DfT, came to £5m a year for three years, from 2007-8 – 2009-10.
- 2.12 The issue of school travel plan coverage is discussed in the Smarter Choices study (Cairns et al, 2004)<sup>10</sup>: Department for Transport figures indicated that by the beginning of 2004 there were over 3,000 school travel plans in place in England, and that by 2006 about 28% of English schools would be expected to have travel plans in place.
- 2.13 National guidance on local transport plans<sup>11</sup>, makes mode share of journeys to school a mandatory indicator for which authorities must set a target. A subsequent review of the take up of smarter choices measures in local transport plans found 69.5% of LTPs made 'reasonable or significant reference' to school travel planning<sup>12</sup>. The study, which looked at 82 LTPs, found that 37 authorities had a target in line with the national objective, for 100% of schools to have an STP by 2010/11. Seven had a more ambitious target - for 100% of schools to have an STP earlier than 2010. Meanwhile 10 had a target for less than 100% of schools to have a plan by 2010/11 and one aimed to produce five STPs annually, with 100% of schools covered by 2016. For LTPs providing figures the average spend on school travel plans was £150,000 a year, though there was wide variation in this figure.

### ***School travel plans and the planning process***

- 2.14 The planning process has also been an important driver in the development of new school travel plans. Local authority experience of securing school travel plans through the planning process was closely examined in research carried out in 2004 for a Department for Transport: *Making school travel plans work: experience from English case studies*<sup>13</sup>. Given the relevance of that study's findings to the current study, we have drawn heavily on that research to report them in detail here.

<sup>9</sup> DfES press notice, 14 October 2004

<sup>10</sup> *Smarter Choices – Changing the Way We Travel, final report of the research project 'The influence of soft factor interventions on travel demand'*, Sally Cairns, Lynn Sloman, Carey Newson, Jillian Anable, Alistair Kirkbride and Phil Goodwin, Department for Transport, July 2004

<sup>11</sup> *Full guidance on local transport plans*, Second edition, Department for Transport, December 2004

<sup>12</sup> *Review of the Take-Up of Smarter Choices in Local Transport Plans – Initial Findings from a Review of LTPs*, prepared by the Operational Research Unit for the Sustainable Travel Initiatives Branch, Department for Transport, January 2007.

<sup>13</sup> *Making school travel plans work: experience from English case studies*, Transport 2000 Turst, University College London, Adrian Davis Associates, Sustrans, Cleary Hughes Associates, Transport for Quality of Life, DfT (forthcoming).

- 2.15 The study found that the vast majority of authorities (20 out of 23) had secured at least one school travel plan through the planning process, with one authority having achieved 50 school travel plans in this way in the previous year. Authorities identified as having the most experience in this area were: **Bradford** and **Buckinghamshire**, followed by **Oxfordshire**, **Hertfordshire**, **Cornwall**, **Devon**, **South Gloucestershire** and **Enfield**. Most authorities raised the issue of school travel planning at an early stage in negotiations, without actually imposing a planning condition or agreement.
- 2.16 Several of the authorities that had made frequent or fairly frequent use of the planning system to secure school travel plans said they had found it effective. In contrast, a few authorities, including Derby, Norfolk and Suffolk which had secured comparatively few travel plans through the planning process, expressed doubts about the quality or meaningfulness of school travel plans achieved by this means.
- 2.17 Opportunities for securing new school travel plans have increased as a result of substantial new capital investment in school buildings. The Government's travelling to school action plan<sup>14</sup> states that measures to support sustainable travel, such as cycle parking and ample locker facilities, would be included in model designs for new school buildings.
- 2.18 *Making school travel plans work* describes the approaches evolved by four authorities, each with some success.

**Nottingham's** experience in working with a newly opened secondary school provided a good example of successful negotiations involving new development leading to positive support for sustainable travel, and comparatively high levels of cycling, but was not the result of a formal planning mechanism. The authority saw the use of a planning condition to secure a school travel plan as a last resort that might be difficult to enforce in practice. The interviewee emphasised the need for early discussions, prior to planning application, commenting that large-scale proposals at a later stage could cause major problems for planning officers working to tight timescales.

**Hertfordshire** had also started to intervene at an earlier stage in the process than previously but was using a formal planning mechanism to do so. Initial difficulties in enforcement and confusion about what was required, had been overcome through the introduction of new procedures and guidance. Originally, schools planning major developments had been required to implement a travel plan as a condition of planning permission. With the help of guidelines developed by the authority's school travel adviser, the process was changed so that schools seeking planning permission were asked to develop a travel plan before planning permission was given. Travel plan implementation was then required by means

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<sup>14</sup> *Travelling to school: an action plan*, Department for Education and Skills and Department for Transport, September 2003.

of a planning condition, with each travel plan expected to include a schedule setting out when activities were to be undertaken and by whom, together with an annual monitoring procedure. This system had the major benefit of enabling school travel staff to engage with the head teacher at a much earlier stage, and, so far, there had been no enforcement issues.

**Devon** had also produced guidance for schools involved in travel planning through the planning process, setting out what was required. Points covered included:

- establishment of a working group
- adoption of the school travel plan by the full governing body and its inclusion in the school development plan
- terms of reference to be agreed by governors, the head teacher and working group co-ordinator;
- completion and analysis of an initial school travel survey
- specifics of what the travel plan should include
- evidence of consultation
- implementation and monitoring procedures
- targets

Securing school travel plans was assisted by close links between the school travel adviser, the capital strategy team in the county's education department and the development control team in planning. At the start of each financial year, the capital strategy team sent the school travel adviser a list of all schools due to have work undertaken.

In **Buckinghamshire** the use of the planning process was facilitated by the authority's 3-tier classification of travel plans describing different levels of maturity in travel plan development. As part of a planning condition, schools were required to produce a 'level 3' travel plan, meaning that the travel plan had to be adopted by the full governing body and included within the school development plan, and that there would be an annual review of the plan's targets and evidence of progress achieved.

- 2.19 Overall, the *Making school travel plans work* interviewees (mainly school travel advisers) emphasised the importance of:
- effective liaison and referral systems between the school travel team and all departments involved in school development, including an agreed protocol for which applications should be commented on
  - the need to raise travel issues at an early stage in the process (i.e. pre-application)
  - the need for clear guidance about what the local authority required in terms of travel planning

### ***Residential travel plans***

- 2.20 Whilst Government guidance on school and workplace travel plans has been available since the late nineties, the first guidance on residential travel plans was

not published by the Department for Transport until 2005. This is notwithstanding the fact that national guidance contained in PPG13, published in 2001, said that planning applications with significant transport implications should be accompanied by a travel plan. *Making residential travel plans work: Good practice guidelines for new development*, (DfT, 2005) puts forward residential travel planning as an important tool for delivering accessible communities, emphasising its importance in the context of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan for new and regenerated residential areas.

- 2.21 The guidance is based on seven case studies of travel plans for new residential developments, drawn up by six local authorities around the country. A residential travel plan is envisaged as a holistic process, integrated into each stage of the design, build and occupation of the site. It begins with decisions about the choice of location, housing density and parking ratios, and progresses through the design of the built environment to encourage walking and cycling friendly and reduce the need to travel. It then goes on to consider provision for staff management of the travel plan, the services which should be provided to facilitate sustainable travel choices and finally the marketing and promotion of those services to residents on an ongoing basis.
- 2.22 The fact that residential travel plans focus on measures at the *origin* of the journey rather than the *destination*, means that these plans aim to influence the much wider range of journey purposes. They also provide a context for a range of other smart measures to be introduced – for example, a car club, school and workplace travel plans for individual organisations within the site's catchment, and individualised marketing for residents.
- 2.23 Although the guidance was derived from real examples, many of the developments involved were not yet built at the time of the research, and residential travel planning is still at a relatively early stage. As yet there is no indication of the number of residential travel plans that have been drawn up or implemented. The research for this report was unable to ascertain numbers as the majority of authorities do not monitor their travel plan activities.

### ***Residential travel plans and the planning process***

- 2.24 The 2005 guidance on residential travel plans focuses wholly on new rather than existing developments and all of the plans featured were secured through the planning system. Consequently the guide gives detailed consideration to this process. It emphasises the importance of a robust policy framework to support negotiations to secure residential travel plans, with a need to relate policies to national guidance on sustainability, planning and transport. It recommends the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents that clarify key policies such as when to require a transport assessment, when to require a residential travel plan, targets, and how to prepare a residential travel plan. It also recommends that targets should be incorporated into policy, with the possible inclusion of targets for trip generation, modal split and trip length as well as qualitative goals for travel behaviour.

- 2.25 The guidance emphasises the importance of pre-application discussions. It advises that these should cover the requirement for a transport assessment and its scope; the layout, mix of uses and design of the site; the need for a travel plan and specific transport works; the components of the plan and the need to involve other parties. It strongly recommends that travel plan measures are ‘designed-in’, from the outset, rather than being ‘retro-fit’.
- 2.26 The guidance recommends the use of section 106 agreements to secure plans with mechanisms within the agreement to provide for reviewing and updating the travel plan over an agreed period of time, once the development is completed. It suggests the need for financial sanctions and highlights the option of requiring bonds or upfront payments against performance of the travel plan or elements of it. From the outset, it recommends, there should be clarity about what will happen in the event that the developer fails to meet essential obligations agreed within the travel plan, such as the delivery of measures; and if the travel plan fails to meet its targets. The guidance also provides examples of sanctions, including payments to the local authority to cover the cost of taking action to deliver agreed outputs or to deliver agreed targets, where these have not been achieved. Another suggested sanction is limitations on the way the site can be used or further developed until such time as the agreed target outcome is achieved – for example, by not allowing subsequent phases of the development to proceed.
- 2.27 The guide points out that revised guidance on planning obligations may create new opportunities for securing funding for travel plan measures. In particular, it suggests that this could enable local authorities to establish ‘travel plan funds’, whereby developers of smaller schemes with travel plans could contribute to a local authority-held fund for implementing measures that are necessary for the wider success of travel plans.
- 2.28 Case studies reviewed in the guide include the use of a number of helpful mechanisms to strengthen section 106 agreements, such as:
- ***Providing incentives to make components of the travel plan succeed.*** For example – the developer could be asked for a subsidy for a service with the agreement that, if this is successful enough to become self-financing, the subsidy will no longer be required. This provides the developer with an inbuilt incentive to promote the service and make it successful. Alternatively, the agreement can ensure that if the subsidy is no longer required for its original purpose the funds will be diverted to pay for other initiatives.
  - ***Introducing contingency arrangements that will come into force if a component does not perform as expected.*** This might cover, for example, plans to implement a controlled parking zone in the neighbouring area if overspill parking necessitates this.
  - ***Clarifying responsibilities and future liabilities and promoting coordination.*** Schedules can spell out contributions and triggers for actions over time, in relation to progress on site.

- **Clarifying the role and responsibilities of the local authority and any third parties, such as transport operators.** Funding may be secured to enable the authority to play a role in future implementation, management, monitoring and review of the travel plan.
- 2.29 A key issue for residential travel plans secured through the planning process, is their sustainability, and successful handover of travel plan management in the longer term from the developer to a future body, such as a site management company. The guidance explores possible management structures to facilitate this process, emphasising the importance of accountability, the ability to take action and funding provision.
- 2.30 In terms of monitoring, the guidance suggests that the key target for a residential travel plan will normally be a number of trips per unit per day, with the target set at a rate lower than would be expected without the travel plan. In line with the methodology developed by the Association for Commuter Transport and TRICS, it is recommended that for new sites, trip generation databases and information about comparable sites should be used to establish a 'baseline' scenario for trip generation.
- 2.31 While this approach appears logical enough, it may, in practice raise some difficulties in the context of a residential travel plan. Given the expectation that travel plan measures are integrated into the site at every stage of the development, the question of what level of car trips the site would have generated without a travel plan becomes a highly hypothetical one. It can only be answered on the basis of certain assumptions about the kind of development that might otherwise have been built, including, for example, the parking ratios that might have been included. The difficulty is that this will depend on an arbitrary set of assumptions that become increasingly irrelevant as good practice evolves.

### **Visitor travel plans**

- 2.32 Visitor travel plans have received much less attention than workplace, school and residential travel plans. Nevertheless, a number of organisations, including the National Trust, the public transport operator First, several national parks and a number of football stadiums have pioneered work in this area. Several examples have been highlighted by Transport 2000 Trust<sup>15</sup> which has also produced a Visitor Travel Checklist for visitor attractions wishing to implement travel plans at their sites. The Government's free site specific advice programme, mentioned above, was also open to visitor attractions wishing to develop travel plans. Sustrans made use of this facility when working with a group of harbour-side attractions in Bristol to develop an overarching travel plan, focusing on both staff and visitor journeys, in an initiative that was part of the European VIVALDI project started in 2002.<sup>16</sup> The *Smarter Choices* report includes the example of a visitor

<sup>15</sup> *Coming up for air: trips that offer freedom from the car*, Transport 2000 Trust, The National Trust, Enjoy England, 2005.

<sup>16</sup> *Vivaldi: bringing it all together*, Sustrans information sheet FF41.

travel initiative which was successful in greatly reducing congestion for visitors to the Farnborough Air Show. First has also reported a successful initiative, incorporating discounts and special bus services, to encourage public transport use by visitors to the Plymouth 'Navy Days' event.

### ***Visitor travel plans and the planning process***

2.33 Inundation with traffic is a common concern among residents faced with the prospect of a new visitor attraction in a quiet country village or a suburban setting, and will often fuel local objections to such proposals. Consequently, the planning process has been an important driver for some visitor travel plans, including some of those at National Trust properties e.g.:

- At Greenway in South Hams, Devon, a section 106 capped car visits at 12,800 vehicles a year with no more than 125 cars a day. Car parking spaces must be pre-booked by phone and the property has experimented with a range of measures to encourage green travel for visitors, including boat access as well as bus and train connections. In 2004 the property received over 27,000 visitors with just over 51% arriving by an alternative mode of transport to the car.<sup>17</sup>
- At Prior Park Landscape Garden near Bath planning permission was initially granted on a temporary basis only because of concerns about traffic. The garden was opened without a car park and a visitor travel plan developed. The visitor service manager subsequently successfully negotiated with an open top tour bus company to introduce a tour route that goes via Prior Park every 30 minutes in Summer, with the result that, by 2005, the majority of the park's 25,000 annual visitors were arriving this way.<sup>18</sup>

### ***Key results of the national travel plan survey***

2.34 As part of this research a questionnaire survey was undertaken to establish the scale of travel planning nationwide. It also reviewed current practice regarding when a travel plan is required, the nature and content of the travel plans, and the mechanisms in place to assess, secure, implement and monitor submitted travel plans. Only 69 responses were received but from a wide range of local authorities, representing all geographical areas and different sizes and type of authority (see Chapter 6 for the full survey results). The low response was as a result of a number of other surveys at the same time as well as shortage of resources linked to the difficulty of obtaining the required information. Those authorities responding reported a three-fold increase in travel plans between 2001 and 2006, though most currently secured less than 10 travel plans per year. Half of the responding authorities had a travel plan officer in post.

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<sup>17</sup> *Influencing Visitor Travel Behaviour*, [internal] report for the National Trust, Lilli Matson, Carey Newson and Lynn Sloman, January 2005.

<sup>18</sup> *Coming up for air: trips that offer freedom from the car*, Transport 2000 Trust, The National Trust, Enjoy England, 2005.

- 2.35 There was no common basis for requiring travel plans, though some authorities set out criteria using similar measurable characteristics as “triggers” (e.g. no units, floor area, number of trips generated). Many authorities did not specify any particular criteria for requiring a travel plan but determined whether one was needed on a case by case basis. Once a travel plan was submitted, about a third of the respondents utilised a formal assessment method, often based on a checklist approach developed to suit local needs and based on local experience. The use of checklists had developed from dissatisfaction with the national evaluation tools which were felt to have limited applicability.
- 2.36 Section 106 agreements were reported to be the dominant mechanism for securing travel plans, particularly for securing of off-site walking /cycling improvements; public transport improvements and infrastructure; management and control of parking; financial incentives; and provision of travel information and travel plan co-ordinators. However, many authorities did not use section 106 agreements though this appeared to be associated with the small scale/less complex nature of the developments. Few local authorities used standard conditions or section 106 clauses. The inclusion of specified corrective action was more widespread than in 2001 though still limited, with new approaches being developed as travel plan work evolved generally. Some authorities considered that corrective action could not be specified as they do not have the resources to follow through. Several authorities have taken enforcement action, though negotiation to amend the travel plan was the preferred.
- 2.37 The survey included a section exploring best practice. The areas where local authorities were most actively employing good practice was in policy formulation and pre-application discussion/negotiation. Best practices such as provision of supplementary planning guidance/clear criteria/internal guidance notes were much less widespread though some authorities were in the process of developing these. Another key area of good practice was the identification of a lead officer on travel planning, but identified weaknesses included data collection/database development, inadequate resources, and lack of confidence in associated mechanisms especially the use of section 106 agreements.
- 2.38 Local authorities were requested to indicate key factors that assist or frustrate their efforts to secure travel plans. A strong policy context was the most often cited “assisting” factor, while key frustrations included the attitudes of members/senior management, need for more training, the lack of clarity (re mechanisms, targets, responsibilities) and inability to deal with under-achievement of targets or pursue non-compliance.

## **B. Travel plan effectiveness**

### ***Effectiveness of workplace travel plans***

- 2.39 Research, both in the UK and internationally, has evaluated the impact of workplace travel planning on commuter travel patterns and considered the likely success factors for reducing car use. This research was reviewed in the Department for Transport research report, *Making travel plans work: lessons*



from UK case studies, (DfT 2002).<sup>19</sup> Besides identifying key issues from the literature, the study examined the achievements of travel plans from 20 UK organisations. Results indicated that on average, these organisations experienced an 18% reduction in the proportion of commuters driving to their sites in the wake of travel plan implementation. The median average reduction was 15%. Reported benefits of travel plans included helping to cut congestion, relieving parking pressures, making sites more accessible, improving staff travel choice and aiding staff retention.

2.40 On the basis of both the literature and the case studies, the research pointed to several overriding factors in determining travel plan success:

- Parking restraint was the hallmark of effective travel plans. Travel plans with the lowest car use had either parking restrictions, parking charges or a combination of the two. The study found that the impact of charging for parking, or providing incentives to those not parking, was generally less pronounced than limiting the space available. A key advantage of charging was that the revenue could provide a ring-fenced income to pay for alternative travel options. Effective parking schemes could be undermined by the availability of free and plentiful off-site parking, so that organisations needed to liaise with the local authority to prevent this happening – for example, by implementing a residents' parking scheme.
- The relative cost of financial incentives and disincentives (such as parking charges) was important in determining travel choices. Financial incentives were at their most effective in the context of parking restraint.
- Promotion and marketing were vital to effective travel planning, with organisations using many innovative strategies to raise staff awareness of alternative travel options. However, it was important that organisations had genuine improvements in travel to 'sell' to staff.
- Strategies to reduce the need to travel – for example through local recruitment or home-working – appeared especially effective, though they were not widely used.

2.41 In terms of an effective process, the study found that successful travel plans:

- Involve partnership working – between the local authority, public transport operators and other employers.
- Identify site specific opportunities and barriers – making the most of the site's 'easy wins' and addressing its 'missing links' (for example, with the National Cycle Network), while tailoring measures to the location and its staff.
- Encourage progressive change – with some strategies to unlock car use (for example, incentives for staff to leave the car at home one day a week) and others to support sustained use of alternative travel (such as a 'guaranteed ride home' when alternative travel arrangements break down).

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<sup>19</sup> *Making travel plans work: lessons from UK case studies*, (Good practice guide and research report) Transport 2000 Trust, University College London and Adrian Davis Associates, Department for Transport, July 2002

- Gain staff ownership for the travel plan – with appropriate consultation, fairness and transparency (for example, in the allocation of parking rights) and plenty of ‘carrots’ to make alternative travel more attractive.
  - Raise the profile of travel initiatives with imaginative promotion and publicity.
  - Reach key groups of staff – segmenting the market for alternative travel and providing ‘the right message at the right time’, to those most likely to respond.
  - Tend to capitalise on change – several organisations had treated relocation or the recruitment of new staff as opportunities to introduce a change in travel conditions, including the allocation of parking
  - Change aspects of the organisation’s culture – engaging management commitment, involving dedicated staff time from a travel plan ‘champion’ and ensuring working arrangements dovetail with travel needs.
  - Focus on results – assessing the impact of individual strategies in reducing car use, and modifying the plan accordingly.
- 2.42 On the issue of location the study found organisations based in rural or green field sites had nevertheless performed well in terms of achieving modal shift. It concludes that a ‘poor’ location cannot be used as a reason for not addressing car travel, but in this context it is likely to be less easy to achieve low end-levels of car use.
- 2.43 The efficacy of workplace travel plans, and the policy measures needed to support them, is further examined in the *Smarter choices* report.<sup>20</sup> This concludes that through the large-scale application of a range of ‘smart’ measures that include workplace travel planning alongside other types of initiatives there would be a reduction in peak period urban traffic of 21% and in non-urban peak period traffic of 14%. Smart messages include also individualised marketing, public transport information and marketing, teleworking, school travel planning and travel awareness campaigns. Travel planning is therefore a key component of national and local strategies to reduce traffic and so cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions contributing to climate change.
- 2.44 The report examined the strategies of local authorities that were aiming to persuade many employers to adopt travel plans. It found that:
- There may be benefits in several sites working together to develop their travel plans. Several local authorities had successfully set up ‘clusters’ involving employers based in the same geographical area.
  - Travel plans were more likely to be effective if introduced in the context of wider traffic restraint policies, such as town centre parking restrictions, lack of town centre parking and high parking charges.
  - Travel plans were also helped by area-wide measures to improve alternative modes of transport, such as county-wide car-sharing schemes,

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<sup>20</sup> *Smarter Choices – Changing the Way We Travel*, Sally Cairns, Lynn Sloman, Carey Newson, Jillian Anable, Alistair Kirkbride and Phil Goodwin, Department for Transport, July 2004.

showcase bus routes and cycle routes. Travel awareness campaigns also made it easier to introduce travel plans.

- Centrally-organised benefits which can be offered to employees in many organisations may help get travel plans off the ground. For example, some local authorities had negotiated discount travel deals with bus and rail companies, which could be offered to employees in all organisations with travel plans.
- While there is more experience of workplace travel planning in urban areas than in rural areas, there are successful examples of workplace travel planning in rural areas.
- As well as reducing car use (by between 0 and 35%, with an average of 18%), companies perceived that workplace travel plans had delivered benefits such as increased health, good PR, financial savings, better estate management, and a better environment.

### ***Effectiveness of school travel plans***

2.45 Following the earlier evaluation of workplace travel plan case studies, *Making travel plans work* looked at the factors underpinning the success of school travel plans in reducing car use<sup>21</sup>. The study examined school travel plans at 30 schools, along with the school travel strategies of their associated local authorities. For the case study schools the average reduction in car use was 23%.

2.46 The study found almost all of these good practice case studies had benefited from:

- A positive relationship with the local authority
- A head teacher that was supportive or very supportive of the travel work
- Sustained travel work over two years or more
- A significant level of awareness raising work
- Leadership from a champion and/or working group

2.47 Features linked with greater reductions in car use included:

- Children's involvement in decision-making perhaps as an indicator of pupils' ownership of the travel work, and empowerment within the school
- The inclusion of school travel policy statements in the school prospectus or induction materials, perhaps demonstrating that travel work had become part of the school's wider ethos
- Specific changes in school facilities or arrangements to support sustainable travel, for example, a new site layout or a breakfast club, which were seen as critical to the success of the plan at some schools
- At secondary schools, more extensive consultation was linked with travel plan success

2.48 In terms of encouraging or discouraging different modes of travel:

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<sup>21</sup> *Making school travel plans work: experience from English case studies*, Transport 2000, UCL et al, Department for Transport, forthcoming.

- Higher levels of walking and cycling were linked to extensive highways safety measures and safety improvements in the surrounding area
- High levels of cycling were linked to the presence of off-road cycle lanes and cycle parking at the school. All seven of the top schools for cycling had cycle parking and were served by off-road cycle paths, in some cases complemented by traffic calming, lower speeds and on-road provision for cycling
- Parking restrictions were linked to lower levels of driving to school
- Schools with high levels of bus use generally had new or improved services in place, and either relatively low fares or fare reduction schemes. Rail travel was often a contributing factor where secondary schools had achieved high levels of passenger transport use.

### ***Effectiveness of residential travel plans***

2.49 As yet there has been no overarching research study to evaluate the effects of residential travel plans on daily car trip rates per unit or modal share at new developments. Many of the residential travel plans have not been monitored or have yet to be fully operational. It is likely that in the next few years that data should begin to become available.

### ***Effectiveness of visitor travel plans***

2.50 Because visitor travel plans have received much less attention than other types of travel plan, their development in the UK is at a much earlier stage, and there has been much less opportunity for a systematic evaluation of good practice. Nevertheless, there are a number of examples of visitor travel plans – for both permanent attractions and events – that have succeeded in increasing the modal share of visitors arriving by more sustainable means, either over time, or in comparison with similar attractions without a travel plan). Some consideration of success factors in sustaining schemes is given in a National Trust ‘policy from practice’ paper on visitor travel<sup>22</sup>, which emphasised the importance of :

- schemes meeting the needs of both visitors and the local community
- effective and targeted advertising and marketing to promote schemes
- partnerships with local authorities and public transport operators to achieve viable services

## **C. Innovative features**

### ***The role of car clubs***

2.51 Since the publication of the previous guidance on securing travel plans, the planning process has increasingly been utilised as a means of securing car clubs for new developments. Car clubs enable their members to have access to a vehicle in their immediate neighbourhood without having to buy or maintain their own vehicle. Members then pay by the mile and hour when they use the vehicle.

<sup>22</sup> *Visitor travel: policy from practice*, National Trust, 2005.

This 'pay as you go' approach to driving encourages travellers to use alternatives to the car more often. Car clubs are a key component in residential travel plans, as shown by the DfT research for *Making residential travel plans work*. This found that car clubs featured in the majority of the case studies, and identified car club provision in this context as an important corollary of parking restraint.

- 2.52 Car clubs and car sharing are supported in DfT's 2004 guidance on local transport plans, which says that such schemes can be integrated into broader sustainable transport planning as well as complementing other policies such as workplace travel planning, creating home zones and granting permissions on new residential developments. The subsequent DfT review of second round local transport plans found the proportion of LTPs making reasonable or significant reference to car clubs was relatively low at 15.9%. Only three LTPs contained spending information relating to promoting car clubs. Two of these authorities intended to spend £80,000 in total over the life to the LTP, while the other planned to spend £5,000 a year.
- 2.53 The organisation Carplus – a national charity promoting 'responsible car use' – has produced an information pack for local authorities and developers on car clubs in property developments.<sup>23</sup> This draws strongly on the DfT guidance on residential travel plans, but also covers a number of other issues. For example, Carplus is well abreast of the work of local authorities in developing their own planning policies and guidance on car clubs. It identifies several authorities that have included car clubs in Supplementary Planning Guidance, namely: the **London Borough of Islington** in an SPG on reduced car housing; **Bristol City Council** in an SPG for developer contributions; and **Leeds City Council** in an SPG on travel plans. Meanwhile, the **London Borough of Sutton** and **Exeter City Council** have both produced Supplementary Planning Documents specifically about car clubs.
- 2.54 Carplus recommends that support for car clubs should be set out in Local Development Frameworks, and adds that it could also be included, and should at least be cross-referenced, in core strategies. **Kirklees Council** in West Yorkshire is cited as one example of an authority that has included car clubs in its core strategy, to be finalised in 2007.
- 2.55 The pack discusses the use of section a 106 agreement to secure a car club, identifying the following key options:
- Financial pump priming – either on a one off basis or over a period of time - to cover the costs of marketing, training and general set up costs
  - The allocation of space and resources to car club stations and markings
  - One – three or five years membership of the car club offered free to new residents, an option considered especially attractive for Housing Association residents

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<sup>23</sup> Car Clubs in Property Developments, an information pack for developers and local authorities, Carplus, 2007.

- 2.56 Carplus suggests that an alternative to entering into a section 106 would be for the developer to enter into a unilateral undertaking with the council – an arrangement which requires no corresponding undertaking on the part of the council and may be quicker and simpler to achieve.
- 2.57 Various options are put forward as a means of generating revenue for a car club, namely, implementing residential parking charges and using the revenue from this; making a charge to the residents' management committee; and opening the scheme to residents outside the immediate development.
- 2.58 The pack sets out roles and responsibilities for the local authority, the developer and the car club operator. Notably, it suggests that, in addition to explaining the process to the developer, the local authority should be responsible for developing a wider car club scheme for the town or city, and for managing the ongoing relationship with the car club operator through a tender process or area wide framework. The developer is expected to deliver on the support outlined in the section 106 agreement, through financial payments to either the operator or the authority, specially marked car stations; and integrated marketing. The car club operator is expected to take on the responsibility and risk of delivering the service, leasing of vehicles and ongoing marketing of the scheme, and possibly train sales staff on the benefits of the car club and how it works. Carplus offers accreditation of car club operators, and the pack includes details of the four operators running major clubs in the UK.
- 2.59 The pack lists several factors affecting the success of the car clubs in new developments:
- A high density of units and mixed use units, so that residential car club use out of hours can be complemented by business use during working hours
  - The opportunity to share costs with other developments in the wider community. Stand alone car clubs in single developments are considered to be 'not ideal' but potentially possible in those of 250 units or more
  - Availability of the scheme to residents when they first move in and the provision of attractive alternatives to the car in terms of opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport use
  - Parking ratios of 0.8 spaces per unit or below
- 2.60 Success factors for car clubs were also evaluated in the DfT study: *Making car sharing and car clubs work* (DfT, 2004).<sup>24</sup> This found that, in urban areas, effective 'drivers' for car clubs included good local representation of housing and commercial development, an effective local integrated public transport network, on-street parking controls and limited off street parking provision in surrounding residential areas.

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<sup>24</sup> *Making Car Sharing and Car Clubs Work: final report*, Integrated Transport Planning, Department for Transport, December 2004.

- 2.61 The research concluded that rural car club schemes were not able to operate without a subsidy, although some pioneering schemes were now starting to operate in a more sustainable way. Pump priming funding was an important success factor for all schemes, especially where initial predictions of take-up in feasibility studies had proved over optimistic. The research found that it was important for car clubs to achieve a critical mass of initial users and that this could take 9 – 18 months.
- 2.62 Clubs with strong, visionary champions or coordinators, enjoying full support from the car club operator, generally proved most successful. A high quality diverse and visual marketing campaign was also considered vital. The report mentions research by the car club operator Our Car Your Car, which found that car clubs did not have a particular catchment market and could appeal to any sector of society. However, the affordability of the scheme in comparison with motoring was of particular importance in disadvantaged communities, where the study noted that the option of joining a car club was sometimes competing with the option of purchasing a very cheap second hand vehicle.
- 2.63 The provision of dedicated and enforced parking spaces for car club vehicles was an important issue. On-street parking spaces were found to be especially helpful in raising the visibility of the scheme. Unpredictability and delays in obtaining Traffic Regulation Orders for on-street parking could be a particular problem.
- 2.64 Only one of the case studies in the research examined the use of a car club in a new development area, and this was the car club in BedZED – the Beddington Zero Energy Development in the London Borough of Sutton. In this setting the car club had proved fundamental to enabling the developer to offer an increased floor area per unit and in convincing prospective residents that they could adopt sustainable low car lifestyles. The BedZED car club was also operating on a full commercial basis, and attributed its success to a variety of factors, including strong partnership working between key agencies; strong marketing and awareness raising (including one-to-one sessions with residents); a good mix of residential and commercial developments, enabling vehicles to be used day and evening; strong public transport connectivity; environmental awareness among residents; the cost of, and constraints to, on-site parking; a good mix of vehicle types; integration with the London City Car Club; the presence of a well informed champion; and travel surveys to improve the scheme over time – for example, through the introduction of a supermarket home delivery service to reduce car trips for shopping. As such, BedZED’s experience offers a remarkably useful model for other schemes.

### ***Personalised travel planning***

- 2.65 Personalised travel planning refers to a range of techniques in which people are given individually tailored advice and support to enable them to choose more sustainable travel patterns. At its simplest this could mean issuing personal journey plans for a specific trip, such as the journey to work. At its most complex it can involve asking individuals or whole households to keep a travel diary,

looking in detail at their travel habits and offering suggestions and incentives to help them carry out the same kind of activities while reducing their overall car use. As Cairns et al note (2004) in the *Smarter Choices* report, two commercial organisations – Socialdata based in Germany and Steer Davies Gleave in the UK – have so far led the field in developing these techniques, using slightly different approaches. Socialdata has pioneered ‘individualised marketing’, which, in the UK, has been developed with the support of the charity Sustrans, under the branding of Travelsmart®. Following on the success of Socialdata’s work in Perth, Western Australia, Sustrans, commissioned the company to set up and run UK pilots in Frome and Gloucester in 2001. Steer Davies Gleave’s work in this area began with an approach called ‘Travel Blending’.

- 2.66 The use of personalised travel planning has gained considerable momentum since the publication of the previous guidance on securing travel plans through the planning process. In 2002 the Department for Transport awarded grants of up to £50,000 on a match funded basis to 14 local authorities in England to run pilot personalised travel planning projects, which together targeted 50,000 people. While some of these were also Travelsmart® schemes, others were delivered by different consultants, including SDG, and some developed by councils themselves. Of the 14 projects six targeted residential areas covering a full range of journeys; six targeted employees and focused primarily on the journey to work, and two targeted schoolchildren and focused primarily the journey to school. A review of the effectiveness of personalised travel planning began in early 2007 and the DfT published the report and summary in October 2007.
- 2.67 Also in 2002, Transport for London funded four pilot projects as part of a ‘Travel Options’ programme, making deliberate use of different consultants and methodologies in order to test their effectiveness. TfL subsequently developed a large scale programme of personalised journey planning, which in 2006/7 covered 55,000 households in Kingston, Sutton and Haringey.<sup>25</sup>
- 2.68 Personalised travel planning is also playing a central part in the work of the three sustainable travel towns, Worcester, Darlington and Peterborough, which are all running major programmes. Mid project results are available from the DfT.
- 2.69 There are now several other authorities embarking on large scale personalised travel planning interventions around the UK. These include Lancashire, whose programme will cover 50,000 households in Lancaster and Morecambe, Preston and South Ribble over two years, and Brighton, which is targeting 10,000 households each year.<sup>26</sup>
- 2.70 In the Department for Transport review of smarter choices measures in second round local transport plans mentioned earlier, 26.8% of LTPs reviewed made reasonable or significant reference to personalised travel planning. Among local authorities providing information on spending on personalised travel planning, the average spend was around £300,000 a year.

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<sup>25</sup> Personal communication, Lynn Sloman

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*



### ***Personalised travel planning and the planning process***

- 2.71 The scope for securing personalised travel planning through the planning process, as part of a wider package of measures, is highlighted in *Making residential travel plans work*, in which several of the case studies included plans for some form of personalised travel planning. One example of this is a 500 home development in Poole, where, by the end of 2006, the consultants implementing the plan reported that they had trained housing sales staff for the development to take new residents through an induction pack which included information about travel, and were themselves planning to provide a personalised travel planning service for the occupants.<sup>27</sup> Most of the residential travel plan schemes included in the DfT guidance issued welcome packs containing travel information, together with a raft of other incentives for sustainable travel of a kind commonly offered in personalised journey planning.
- 2.72 Also in 2006, Sustrans reported the first of its TravelSmart programmes to be funded through developer contributions, brokered by planning officers at **Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council**. The programme covered 200 households in a new residential development, alongside 2,300 existing ones.<sup>28</sup>

### ***Effectiveness of personalised journey planning***

- 2.73 The Department for Transport commissioned a new study on personalised travel planning, '*Making personal travel planning work*', in 2007 which included a review of good practice from existing case studies, and aimed to identify the key elements for running a successful project and achieving measurable and cost-effective benefits. The project resulted in good practice guidance for both local authorities and developers considering procuring or running personalised travel planning campaigns. As such it is an important resource to be used in tandem with the updated guidance on securing travel plans to be produced from this study. Completed and published in October 2007, the personalised travel planning research also assesses the evidence on the sustainability of results from previous campaigns, and added significantly to the existing evidence base.
- 2.74 Evidence on the effectiveness of personalised travel planning was also assessed in the *Smarter Choices* report. As the researchers point out, there are some differences in the way in which different applications have been monitored so that results cannot always be directly compared. Nevertheless, the study's review of UK projects found evidence that individualised marketing initiatives reduced car driver trips by between 5% and 16%. The finding was consistent with the study's assessment based on the literature, that personalised travel planning reduces car driver trips amongst targeted populations by 7 – 15% in urban areas and 2-6% in rural areas. Costs for large scale implementation were estimated at less than £20 per head.

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<sup>27</sup> Update provided by Brendan Quinn, Foxley Tagg, November 2006.

<sup>28</sup> *Leading the way in travel behaviour change*, Sustrans information sheet FF36

- 2.75 In addition, the study concluded:
- For personalised travel planning to be successful it is important that some alternative transport modes are of good quality
  - Where improvements to public transport services are introduced then personalised travel planning can increase the impact of these improvements, however, personalised travel planning can also be effective without such changes
  - While there is some evidence from Socialdata projects that the journeys most readily affected are off-peak trips for leisure and shopping, other projects have been successful in targeting commuter trips, for example, through the provision of journey planners
  - All the initiatives reviewed had achieved some car use reduction, although results from travel blending initiatives appeared a little less promising: however, the authors comment that this may be because these were small scale initiatives that were conducted at a comparatively early stage
  - Most initiatives had a positive effect on walking and public transport use, and some had a positive effect on cycling: in one project there appeared to have been an increase in the use of local facilities at the expense of those further away
- 2.76 Findings from an evaluation of four TfL pilot projects<sup>29</sup> suggest further issues for good practice:
- Initiatives were more successful in reducing car use where participants were able to exercise control over the information they were sent. In one trial participants were sent a high quality information pack, but the effect on their car use was much lower than the reductions achieved in trials where the participants actively selected the information they wished to receive.
  - Personal contact appears important in eliciting a good response. In one of the trials, some of the households involved were contacted by post, but this proved time consuming and led to a comparatively low response. (Interestingly, in one of the Sustrans projects a problem in contacting householders by phone meant travel information was offered and selected on the doorstep, and this appeared to have a positive effect on the response rate.)
  - London may present particular challenges. There was a comparatively low level of interest in personal journey plans, home visits and test tickets. This was thought to be related both to a high level of awareness about public transport (i.e. participants felt they already knew enough) and to a general lack of time on the part of London residents.
  - Interestingly, TfL concluded that new housing developments offered good potential for influencing travel behaviour. One of the more successful trials, carried out by Steer Davies Gleave, focused on households on a

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<sup>29</sup> *Individualised Marketing Pilot Projects in London*, Interim Report, Patrick Allcorn, Alison Powell and Claire Hickey, Transport for London, September 2002.

recently occupied housing estate. The reduction in car use, amalgamated for both car as driver and car as passenger, was 11%.

- 2.77 As mentioned earlier, TfL has subsequently embarked on large scale personalised journey planning exercise, and is likely to have gained a wealth of experience that should duly be reflected in the new DfT guidance.
- 2.78 Further evidence on the effectiveness of personalised travel planning can be found in an independent evaluation, by the DfT's Operational Research Unit, of the final reports submitted by 14 local authorities that were funded by DfT to develop PTP pilots.<sup>30</sup> This concluded that the pilots, which cost £894,554 in total, delivered an estimated saving of approximately 11.4 million car km a year. OPU calculates that the average cost per car km saved was 8p, but adds that these headline results masked considerable variation in the costs and benefits achieved.
- 2.79 OPU concludes that a variety of factors had affected the success of the pilots, including:
- The receptiveness of the participants to a change in travel mode – which was often increased by disincentives to car use such as parking charges and congestion
  - The physical and financial ability of participants to make the change, the availability of practical and affordable alternatives to the car and the extent to which the experience of the new mode of transport was good enough to persuade the participant to make a permanent change.
  - The use of incentives, such as free or reduced price bus passes
  - The way in which participants were approached – for example face to face contact appeared more effective than other forms of marketing, and the relationship established between project staff and the participant also appeared important
  - Careful selection of target populations and thoughtful and appropriate marketing to the target group
  - Collaboration between partner organisations and public transport providers
- 2.80 The pilots were developed in school and workplace settings as well as in a residential context, and the study concluded that those projects targeting residents tended to provide more consistent results and better value for money, though all three produced reductions in car use.

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<sup>30</sup> *Personalised travel planning: evaluation of 14 pilots part funded by DfT*, Operational Research Unit, DfT, June 2005.

## Chapter 3: An update on legislative and policy background

### *Introduction*

3.1 This section of the research report outlines the broader policy framework that is relevant to travel planning as included in government legislation and guidance. It amplifies on the potential for using planning obligations to secure travel plans. It is included to make it easier for the different disciplines who need to work on travel planning so understand the full range of policy framework. It is divided into two sections:

A. Update on policy framework for securing travel plans:

It includes brief reviews of:

- *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*
- *Draft Climate Change Bill*
- *White Paper: Planning for a Sustainable Future*
- *Circular 2/07: Planning and the Strategic Road Network*
- *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development*
- *Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing*
- *Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies*
- *Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks*
- *Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport*
- *Guidance on Transport Assessment*
- *Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*
- *Making Residential Travel Plans Work: Guidelines for New Development*

B. Update on legislative framework and associated research for Planning Obligations

The effectiveness of travel plans often hinges on the way they are secured through planning obligations. Recent changes to the planning obligation legislation and guidance (*Circular 5/05 Planning Obligations*) are of particular relevance to travel planning. Changes in the way planning obligations operate have been under discussion and generated research: *Changes to Planning Obligations; Valuing planning obligations in England* (DCLG) and *Securing Community Benefits through the Planning Process* (Audit Commission) help identify “success factors” in using planning obligations to secure community benefits. This review draws out key messages that have informed the updated guidelines.

## **A Update on policy framework for securing travel plans**

- 3.2 The Department for Transport travel plan guidance<sup>31</sup> was written in 2001 and since then the national policy framework has strengthened its sustainability objectives and identified travel plans as an important part of the delivery network. At that time *Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport* (revised in 2001)<sup>32</sup> provided the main justification for travel plan requirements. It promoted sustainable transport objectives and explicitly established provision for travel plans, floorspace targets for when travel plans should be sought and that either a planning condition or section 106 agreement could be appropriate (see below).
- 3.3 The focus on the delivery of sustainable development and sustainable travel is now detailed in a range of national legislative and planning policy and guidance documents (from different government departments) that cover planning, climate change, transport, and housing policy and guidance. These provide a broader and stronger policy framework for travel plans, and this literature review seeks to draw together the key policy elements that currently bear on travel planning and which have informed the preparation of the updated guidelines.

### ***Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004***<sup>33</sup>

- 3.4 This Act and related regulations initiated a major overhaul of the planning system, underpinned by the statutory duty to deliver sustainable development. The Act has led to a range of new requirements and revised legislation, including:
- Introduction of a plan-led system / process to achieve sustainability through a revised planning policy framework comprising the national Planning Policy Statements and guidance notes
  - Strengthening the role of regional planning through the requirement for statutory Regional Spatial Strategies prepared by Regional Planning bodies
  - The introduction of a requirement that all local planning authorities prepare Local Development Frameworks that develop spatial strategies and policies for their area
  - The testing of both RSSs and LDFs through an Examination in Public to ensure that they are sound, and the requirement to keep them under review and monitor implementation
  - The requirement for all policy to be evidence-based and developed through the engagement of all stakeholders from the earliest stage

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<sup>31</sup> *Using the Planning Process to Secure Travel Plans: Best Practice Guide*, ODPM & DfT, 2002

<sup>32</sup> *Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport*, DETR, 2001

<sup>33</sup> *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act*, 2004

### ***Draft Climate Change Bill***<sup>34</sup>

- 3.5 The draft Bill sets out a framework for achieving a “low carbon” economy and provides the broader context for the Planning Policy Statements, including the Supplement to PPS1 *Planning and Climate Change*<sup>35</sup> anticipated in the recent Planning White Paper<sup>36</sup>. These recognise the role of the planning system in reducing greenhouse gases through requirements which reduce the use of fuels and electricity, and by other means such as through the location of development to reduce the need to travel and encouraging sustainable modes of transport.

### ***White Paper: Planning for a Sustainable Future***<sup>37</sup>

- 3.6 The White paper sets out the governments’ proposals for the reform of the planning system, building on recommendations from Kate Barker and Rod Eddington. It includes the proposal for a new system for dealing with major infrastructure projects and simplifies the local planning system in respect of householder improvements, but is most relevant to travel planning in its amplification of how the planning system can help tackle climate change through the delivery of more sustainable development.
- 3.7 The Planning White Paper pledges revisions to national policy statements, the finalisation of the PPS on Climate Change, and potential changes to achieve more effective plan preparation and more streamlined and efficient planning performance. Reviews are proposed to improve the management of complex planning applications and to reconsider the processes (eg sustainability appraisals) required for the preparation of LDFs and SPDs.

### ***Circular 2/07: Planning and the Strategic Road Network***<sup>38</sup>

- 3.8 PPG 13 promoted sustainable transport objectives and their delivery through the planning system, and explicitly established provision for travel plans and how they may be secured (see below). These aspects of national policy have also been reflected in the policy of the Highway Agency (HA) which is now actively promoting the use of travel plans as a way of managing growth of traffic on to their network (see Chapter 7 for examples of the HA approach in specific cases).
- 3.9 This recent Circular has clarified the role and policy objectives of the Highways Agency in relation to the planning process (including the production of RSSs and LDFs), and updated section 278 of the Highways Act of 1980 in respect of trunk roads. As part of its objective to minimise the need to build new road infrastructure the HA promotes transportation demand management:

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<sup>34</sup> *Draft Climate Change Bill*, DEFRA, 2007

<sup>35</sup> *Supplement to PPS1: Planning and Climate Change*, DCLG 2007

<sup>36</sup> *Planning for a Sustainable Future*, DCLG, DEFRA, TI, DfT, May 2007

<sup>37</sup> *Planning for a Sustainable Future*, DCLG, DEFRA, TI, DfT, May 2007

<sup>38</sup> *Circular 2/07: Planning and the Strategic Road Network*, DfT, March 2007

*“It is Government transport policy, wherever possible, to look for alternatives to building new roads, by reducing the impact of road users on each other and the environment, improving road performance through better network management and making smarter journey choices easier.....Development should be promoted at sustainable locations, and the Agency will expect to see demand management measures incorporated in development proposals (see paragraph 33). The Agency will seek to engage with LPAs and Local Highway Authorities in order to integrate demand management between the strategic and local road networks and the development site itself.*

*Demand management covers the range of techniques used to reduce traffic generation. Having regard to the guidance set out in PPG13, paragraph 89, developers, working in partnership with local authorities (where appropriate), must submit plans for the implementation and maintenance of measures that will minimise the traffic generated by their development. This is likely to be through travel plans. These will include, but will not be limited to, measures to manage car use, particularly by single occupants. Examples of such techniques may include tailored provision of public transport, car sharing/pooling, parking control, and the encouragement of cycling and walking.” (para 8, 23 and 33)<sup>39</sup>*

- 3.10 The Circular empowers the Secretary of State to direct that a condition be attached to any planning permissions which may specify the demand management or improvement measures required to manage or accommodate traffic generation related to the development. The expectation is that developers would enter into planning obligations or highway agreements to secure such measures, which could include travel plans.

***Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development<sup>40</sup>***

- 3.11 The national Planning Policy Statements / Guidance and related guidance covering transport, planning, housing, parking, affordable housing, accessibility /community need, and social inclusion now incorporate detailed sustainability objectives. They reinforce the need for integration of planning and transport at both the policy level and in delivery, and the need for developments to incorporate transportation demand management and travel planning at an early stage. At the core of the new system is the objective of achieving sustainable development, as set out in *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development* (PPS 1). The Statement sets out principles which directly promote and support more sustainable patterns of development and accessibility. Key principles include:

*“Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change – through policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions (for example, by encouraging patterns of development*

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<sup>39</sup> Circular 2/07: Planning and the Strategic Road Network, DfT, March 2007

<sup>40</sup> Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2005

*which reduce the need to travel by private car, or reduce the impact of moving freight), promote the development of renewable energy resources, and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development.”*

*“Development plans should also contain clear, comprehensive and inclusive access policies – in terms of both location and external physical access. Such policies should consider people’s diverse needs and aim to break down unnecessary barriers and exclusions in a manner that benefits the entire community.”*

- 3.12 In preparing development plans, PPS1 states that local authorities should promote and facilitate sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development through managing the location and design of development to reduce the need to travel and promoting accessibility to employment centres, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling. Extracts from the general approach outlined in the Statement include:

*“(v) Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas.*

*(vi) Focus developments that attract a large number of people, especially retail, leisure and office development, in existing centres to promote their vitality and viability, social inclusion and more sustainable patterns of development.*

*(vii) Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development. Planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges.”*

### **Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing<sup>41</sup>**

- 3.13 PPS 3 is particularly relevant to residential travel planning, requiring local authorities to create more sustainable patterns of development. Development should be more efficient in the use of land and encourage accessibility and integration with public transport and community facilities. Local authorities should seek to reduce the environmental impacts of housing through effective use of land and existing infrastructure; and by focusing new development in locations with good public transport accessibility and the potential to make use of renewable and low carbon forms of energy supply.

*“Local Planning Authorities should encourage applicants to bring forward sustainable and environmentally friendly new housing developments, including affordable housing developments, and in doing so should reflect the approach set out in the forthcoming PPS on climate change, including on the Code for Sustainable Homes.*

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<sup>41</sup> Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing, DCLG 2006



*Matters to consider when assessing design quality include the extent to which the proposed development:*

- *Is easily accessible and well-connected to public transport and community facilities and services, and is well laid out so that all the space is used efficiently, is safe, accessible and user-friendly.*
- *Provides, or enables good access to, community and green and open amenity and recreational space (including play space) as well as private outdoor space such as residential gardens, patios and balconies.*
- *Is well integrated with, and complements, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale, density, layout and access.*
- *Facilitates the efficient use of resources, during construction and in use and seeks to adapt to and reduce the impact of, and on, climate change.*
- *Takes a design-led approach to the provision of car-parking space, that is well-integrated with a high quality public realm and streets that are pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly.*
- *Creates, or enhances, a distinctive character that relates well to the surroundings and supports a sense of local pride and civic identity.*
- *Provides for the retention or re-establishment of the biodiversity within residential environments.” (paras 15 & 16)*

- 3.14 The Statement requires that local development documents should set out a strategy for the planned location of housing so that it achieves sustainable development, with Local Planning Authorities developing criteria for the identification of suitable housing sites in conjunction with local stakeholders.

***Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies<sup>42</sup>***

- 3.15 Policy integration between transport and spatial planning is achieved at the regional level through preparation of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS) in accordance with PPS11 . The RSS provides a spatial framework for the preparation of LDDs, Local Transport Plans (LTPs) and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes that have a bearing on land use activities.

*“The RSS can also include policies to manage regionally or sub-regionally significant uses and development. These might include, for example, demand management policies to reduce traffic volumes.” (para 1.2.)*

*“This integrated approach should help to deliver more sustainable travel patterns and to identify locations for housing, commercial development and essential services in areas of high public transport accessibility.”*

- 3.16 The *Regional Transport Strategy* (RTS) provides key transport measures in support of the RSS and explicitly refers to the role of travel planning in addressing issues of congestion, poor accessibility, regeneration, and housing and economic growth.

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<sup>42</sup> *Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2005*

*“The RTS ... a strategic framework for public transport that identifies measures to improve accessibility to jobs and key services at the regional and sub-regional level, expands travel choice, improves access for those without a car, and guides the location of new development;*

- *advice on parking policies appropriate to different parts of the region; and*
- *guidance on the strategic context for local demand management measures within the region.”*

**Para. 37.** *Most of these measures will be for implementation by local authorities and the RTS has a key role in steering LTPs on where demand management measures might be appropriate. RPBs should identify in the RTS locations where demand management would help solve specific congestion problems and set out criteria and policy principles for appropriate schemes. These will need to consider the extent of competition between centres and the accompanying economic and social impacts, and should include complementary sustainable transport measures such as travel planning and provision for walking and cycling, and necessary improvements to public transport.*

### **Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks<sup>43</sup>**

- 3.17 At the local level, the Local Development Framework (LDF) provides the spatial expression of a Council's overall strategy for its area and must relate to both the regional and national policies and address the framework set out in PPS12 *Local Development Frameworks*<sup>44</sup>. The Core Strategy should set out the long term spatial vision and how it will be implemented through housing, employment, leisure, retail community, essential public services and transport development. The LDF would include transport-related policies and reflect national/regional policy to provide the framework for the consideration of planning applications. In addition the LDF should mirror the Local Transport Plans (LTP).
- 3.18 PPS12 stresses the importance of preparing and maintaining an up to date evidence base to underpin the policies set out in the local development documents. *“Local planning authorities should prepare and maintain an up-to-date information base on key aspects of the social, economic and environmental characteristics of their area, to enable the preparation of a sound spatial plan meeting the objectives of sustainable development”*. (para 4.8).
- 3.19 Local development documents are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act<sup>45</sup> and therefore are also subject to a Sustainability Appraisal<sup>46</sup> to ensure they have regard to the objectives and principles of sustainable development as set out in PPS1<sup>47</sup> (see above). They also reflect community involvement in their

<sup>43</sup> *Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks*, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2004

<sup>44</sup> *Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks*, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2004

<sup>45</sup> *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act*, 2004

<sup>46</sup> *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*

<sup>47</sup> *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development*, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2005

preparation and revision, for which the process and policy is required to be set out in the statement of community involvement.

- 3.20 PPS12 also clarified the status of supplementary planning guidance “*which may expand policy or provide further detail to policies in a development plan document. They must not however, be used to allocate land.*” (para 2.43). While their scope and format is not proscribed, they are required to follow four principles:
- *be consistent with national and regional planning policies as well as the policies set out in the development plan documents contained in the local development framework;*
  - *be clearly cross-referenced to the relevant development plan document policy which it supplements;*
  - *be reviewed on a regular basis alongside reviews of the development plan document policies to which it relates; and*
  - *the process by which it has been prepared must be made clear and a statement of conformity with the statement of community involvement must be published with it.*

**Planning Policy Guidance Note 13: Transport<sup>48</sup>**

- 3.21 PPG13 was the first guidance that explicitly set out the requirements for transport assessments and travel plans. These were part of an overall objective to better integrate planning and transport at all levels in order to:
- *promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and for moving freight;*
  - *promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling, and*
  - *reduce the need to travel, especially by car.* (para 4)

It went on to state:

*“6. In order to deliver the objectives of this guidance, when preparing development plans and considering planning applications, local authorities should:*

1. *actively manage the pattern of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport, and focus major generators of travel demand in city, town and district centres and near to major public transport interchanges;*
2. *locate day to day facilities which need to be near their clients in local centres so that they are accessible by walking and cycling;*
3. *accommodate housing principally within existing urban areas, planning for increased intensity of development for both housing and other uses at locations which are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;*
4. *ensure that development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services offers a realistic choice of access by public transport, walking, and cycling, recognizing that this may be less achievable in some rural areas;*

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<sup>48</sup> *Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport*, DETR, 2001

5. *in rural areas, locate most development for housing, jobs, shopping, leisure and services in local service centres which are designated in the development plan to act as focal points for housing, transport and other services, and encourage better transport provision in the countryside;*
6. *ensure that strategies in the development and local transport plan complement each other and that consideration of development plan allocations and local transport investment and priorities are closely linked;*
7. *use parking policies, alongside other planning and transport measures, to promote sustainable transport choices and reduce reliance on the car for work and other journeys;*
8. *give priority to people over ease of traffic movement and plan to provide more road space to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport in town centres, local neighbourhoods and other areas with a mixture of land uses;*
9. *ensure that the needs of disabled people as pedestrians, public transport users and motorists - are taken into account in the implementation of planning policies and traffic management schemes, and in the design of individual developments; consider how best to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and seek by the design and layout of developments and areas, to secure community safety and road safety; and*
10. *protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choices for both passenger and freight movements.”*

3.22 PPG13 required preparation and submission of Transport Assessments alongside the relevant planning applications where developments have significant transport implications and *“For major proposals, the assessment should illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site. It should also give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal and to mitigate transport impacts. Where appropriate, a travel plan should be included.”*(para 23)

3.23 The Guidance set out detailed requirements related to travel plans:

*“87. The Government wants to help raise awareness of the impacts of travel decisions and promote the widespread use of travel plans amongst businesses, schools, hospitals and other organisations<sup>26</sup>. Local authorities are expected to consider setting local targets for the adoption of travel plans by local businesses and other organisations and to set an example by adopting their own plans.*

*88. There is no standard format or content for travel plans, and they may have a variety of names (such as green transport plans, company travel plans and school travel plans). However, their relevance to planning lies in the delivery of sustainable transport objectives, including:*

1. *reductions in car usage (particularly single occupancy journeys) and increased use of public transport, walking and cycling;*
2. *reduced traffic speeds and improved road safety and personal security particularly for pedestrians and cyclists; and*

3. *more environmentally friendly delivery and freight movements, including home delivery services.*

*89. The Government considers that travel plans should be submitted alongside planning applications which are likely to have significant transport implications, including those for:*

1. *all major developments comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services (using the same thresholds as set out in annex D);*
2. *smaller developments comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services which would generate significant amounts of travel in, or near to, air quality management areas<sup>27</sup>, and in other locations where there are local initiatives or targets set out in the development plan or local transport plan for the reduction of road traffic, or the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling. This particularly applies to offices, industry, health and education uses;*
3. *new and expanded school facilities which should be accompanied by a school travel plan which promotes safe cycle and walking routes, restricts parking and car access at and around schools, and includes on-site changing and cycle storage facilities; and*
4. *where a travel plan would help address a particular local traffic problem associated with a planning application, which might otherwise have to be refused on local traffic grounds.*

*However, unacceptable development should never be permitted because of the existence of a travel plan.*

*90. Where travel plans are to be submitted alongside a planning application, they should be worked up in consultation with the local authority and local transport providers. They should have measurable outputs, which might relate to targets in the local transport plan, and should set out the arrangements for monitoring the progress of the plan, as well as the arrangements for enforcement, in the event that agreed objectives are not met. They might be designed for the applicant only, or be part of a wider initiative, possibly organised by the local authority, involving other developments in the area.*

*91. The weight to be given to a travel plan in a planning decision will be influenced by the extent to which it materially affects the acceptability of the development proposed and the degree to which it can be lawfully secured. Under certain circumstances some or all of a travel plan may be made binding either through conditions attached to a planning permission or through a related planning obligation. Conditions attached to a planning permission will be enforceable against any developer who implements that permission and any subsequent occupiers of the property. Planning obligations will be enforceable against the person who entered into the obligation and any person deriving title from that person.”*

## **Guidance on Transport Assessment** <sup>49</sup>

3.24 This recently published (March 2007) Guidance places emphasis on sustainable development and how sustainable transport contributes to its delivery, including guidance on the linkage with national and regional policy and the importance of transport issues being included in Local Development Frameworks.

3.25 The Guidance on Transport Assessment states:

*“Government transport policy is, wherever possible, to seek alternative solutions to building new roads, by reducing the impact of road users on each other and the environment, improving road performance through improved network management and facilitating smarter journey choices. The presumption should be to give preference where possible to solutions other than the construction of new roads.”* (para 4.82)

3.26 The Transport Assessment, in conjunction with other supporting documents, will form the basis for determining the level of impact of a development on the highway network and outlines how this should be assessed and what mitigation measures may be appropriate. Where the strategic road network is impacted the Highways Agency *“will work with developers to secure delivery of their proposals in such a way that they minimise any additional burden on other users of the strategic road network.”* (para 5.18)

3.27 It clarifies that the transport mitigation plan or package of measures should focus on **maximising sustainable accessibility to the development**. *“At the outset, the mitigation plan should consider measures such as: improvements to development site layout to facilitate walking and cycling as well as accessibility to the local public transport infrastructure; improvements to walking and cycling provisions in the vicinity of the development site; and improvements to the local public transport network.”*

3.28 The Guidance recognises that travel plans are becoming an important tool in the delivery of sustainable outcomes. The guidance defines a travel plan as *“ a package of site-specific initiatives aimed at improving the availability and choice of travel modes to and from a development. It may also promote practices or policies that reduce the need for travel.”* (Para 4.80)

3.29 The following extract from the Guidance sets out the considerations that are relevant to the preparation of a transport assessment:

*“Encouraging environmental sustainability*

- **Reducing the need to travel, especially by car** - *reducing the need for travel, reducing the length of trips, and promoting multi-purpose or linked trips by promoting more sustainable patterns of development and more*

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<sup>49</sup> *Guidance on Transport Assessment*, DfT and DCLG, 2007

*sustainable communities that reduce the physical separation of key land uses.*

- **Tackling the environmental impact of travel** - *by improving sustainable transport choices, and by making it safer and easier for people to access jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking, and cycling.*
- **The accessibility of the location** - *the extent to which a site is, or is capable of becoming, accessible by non car modes, particularly for large developments that involve major generators of travel demand.*
- **Other measures which may assist in influencing travel behaviour (ITB)** - *achieving reductions in car usage (particularly single occupancy vehicles), by measures such as car sharing/pooling, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and parking control.*

*Managing the existing network*

- **Making best possible use of existing transport infrastructure** - *for instance by low-cost improvements to the local public transport network and using advanced signal control systems, public transport priority measures (bus lanes), or other forms of Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to improve operations on the highway network. It should be noted that the capacity of the existing public transport infrastructure and footpaths is finite, and in some areas overcrowding already exists.*
- **Managing access to the highway network** - *taking steps to maximise the extent to which the development can be made to 'fit' within the available capacity by managing access from developments onto the highway network.*

*Mitigating residual impacts*

- **Through demand management** - *using traffic control measures across a wide network to regulate flows.*
- **Through improvements to the local public transport network, and walking and cycling facilities** - *for example, by extending bus routes and increasing bus frequencies, and designing sites to facilitate walking and cycling.*
- **Through minor physical improvements to existing roads** - *it may be possible in some circumstances to improve the capacity of existing roads by relatively minor physical adjustments such as improving the geometry of junctions etc. within the existing highway boundary.*
- **Through provision of new or expanded roads** - *it is considered good transport planning practice to demonstrate that the other opportunities above have been fully explored before considering the provision of additional road space such as new roads or major junction upgrades. (para 1.19)"*

3.30 The guidance includes a number of other key messages relevant to travel plans:

- **Importance of the evidence base**  
The Guidance notes that national planning policy emphasises the requirement for development plans to be founded on “a robust and

credible evidence base” and as part of this requires “*that the transport impacts of alternative spatial development patterns are properly assessed at an early stage and throughout the plan making process as an integral part of the Sustainability Appraisal of emerging plans and that appropriate policy responses are developed to reduce the need to travel and to promote sustainable transport choices.*” The use of transport modelling and other techniques is acknowledged to be resource intensive and the guidance stresses the importance of making use of existing information such as transport and land-use models and/or studies carried out by the HA and PTAs along with transport assessments for recent developments nearby.

- **Promoting Smarter Choices via travel plans**  
The Guidance recommends that Travel Plans will include techniques for influencing people's travel behaviour towards more sustainable options, such as encouraging school, workplace and individualised travel, personalised journey plans, public transport information and marketing initiatives, car sharing schemes and car clubs, plus measures which reduce the need to travel such as videoconferencing and tele-working.
- **Reinforce the need for local planning policies to support effective travel plans**  
The Guidance outlines the importance of incorporating policies which support the development of effective travel plans in the LDF and LTP, as clarified through supplementary planning advice. It also includes the requirement for the pre-application discussions to include a draft travel plan and address site specific issues; this supports the PPG13 requirement that a travel plan should be submitted alongside planning applications.
- **Cumulative effects of multiple potential developments**  
The Guidance indicates that at the LDF stage the cumulative effects of multiple potential developments should be assessed in order to evaluate the interaction of different developments on the wider network and to identify potential environmental difficulties at an early stage. The NATA (new approach to appraisal) is suggested as a useful framework for assessing the overall transport impact of a major development. (The NATA recommends the assessment of a wide range of environmental, social and economic impacts to enable sustainable decisions to be made and is set out in para 4.28 of the Guidance.)
- **Coordination of travel plans**  
The Guidance advises “*use of an ‘Area Travel Plan’ and co-ordination with travel plans from adjacent developments should also be considered during the pre-application consultations. The use of Area and Site Specific Travel Plans is an important mechanism in the underlying aim to manage vehicle trips at source. Whenever a site-specific TP is proposed, the developer should ascertain the existence of an Area Wide TP.*”



*Where one exists, the site-specific TP should integrate with the Area Wide TP.”*

**Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**<sup>50</sup>

- 3.31 Future of Transport' identifies some of the key strategies to help local government deliver a number of outcomes including promoting the use of school travel plans, workplace travel plans and personalised travel planning to encourage people to consider and use alternatives to their cars. Local transport authorities should also consider how they could deliver progress in all the shared priority areas through policies aimed at changing travel behaviour, and managing demand for transport services. Sustainable travel policies of this kind should, if introduced in the context of a high quality LTP, prove highly cost-effective, avoiding the need to spend larger sums on infrastructure based solutions. As well as their well-understood role in tackling congestion, many initiatives aimed at managing demand for transport services by bringing behavioural change are particularly relevant to accessibility. Because they give people a genuine alternative to using their car, programmes to promote sustainable travel can provide quick, comparatively inexpensive benefits in terms of social inclusion, accessibility, regeneration and pollution. Demand management measures are central to the Government's transport strategy; the Department for Transport will therefore consider all authorities' demand management proposals carefully, as part of LTP assessment.
- 3.32 There is a wide range of possible measures in this area. They include:
- road user charging and workplace parking charging schemes
  - active management of the availability and cost of car parking and public transport
  - school, workplace and personalised travel planning
  - marketing and transport information services (including innovative use of services such as Transport Direct and Traveline, and innovative ticketing offers)
  - setting up websites for car share schemes and facilitating car clubs
  - measures to promote teleconferencing and teleworking
  - delivering through-ticketing, 'seamless journeys', and a better experience of public transport, through the development of smartcard systems<sup>4</sup>
  - and other innovative uses of information technology
- 3.33 Local transport authorities should also consider how demand management measures could help to deliver the most effective outcomes from major infrastructure projects. Packages of complementary measures have been shown to 'lock in' the benefits of new investment, ensuring it continues to deliver the best possible value for money long after initial implementation. The Department therefore intends in future to consider evidence about authorities' plans for demand management measures when considering major scheme bids.

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<sup>50</sup> Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, DfT, 2006

- 3.34 The guidance supports integration at policy level by identifying “shared priorities” as the framework for LTP proposals: *“The Department recommends that authorities, in their new LTPs, demonstrate their benefits of their local transport programmes and policies in sections reflecting objectives for each of the four shared priorities set out below (ie accessibility, congestion, air quality, road safety). All local transport modes (bus, light rail, cycling, walking, driving and motorcycling, taxis, freight etc.) are important to the delivery of two or more of the four transport shared priorities. The Department would therefore prefer the contributions of particular modes to be reflected in objective related sections, not in separate modal sections”* (para 99).

### ***Making Residential Travel Plans Work: Guidelines for New Development***

- 3.35 This document has been extensively referred to in the earlier section of this research report as part of the section on developments in travel plans since the publication of the previous guidance.

### **B. Update on legislative framework and associated research for planning obligations**

- 3.36 The statutory basis for planning obligations remains section 106 (s106) of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* (as substituted by the *1991 Act*). The new ODPM Circular 5/05 *Planning Obligations* replaced Circular 1/97 relating to the use of planning obligations under this section. Circular 5/05 broadly retains the approach set out in the Circular 1/97 but places greater emphasis on the need to relate planning obligations to sustainability objectives.
- 3.37 The future basis for planning obligations may change as a result of issues raised by the findings of the *Barker’s Review of Housing Supply*, subsequent reports and related consultations and research. The forthcoming Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will also impact on how section 106 is used.

### ***Circular 5/05 Planning Obligations***<sup>51</sup>

- 3.38 Planning Obligations are defined as:

*“private agreements negotiated, usually in the context of planning applications, between local planning authorities and persons with an interest in a piece of land (or “developers”), and intended to make acceptable development which would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. Obligations can also be secured through unilateral undertakings by developers. For example, planning obligations might be used to prescribe the nature of a development (e.g. by requiring that a given proportion of housing is affordable); or to secure a contribution from a developer to compensate for loss or damage created by a development (e.g. loss of open space); or to mitigate a development’s impact (e.g. through increased public transport provision). The outcome of all three of these uses of planning*

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<sup>51</sup> Circular 5/05: *Planning Obligations*, ODPM, 2005

*obligations should be that the proposed development concerned is made to accord with published local, regional or national planning policies.” (para B3)*

3.39 Planning obligations may only be sought where they meet basic tests:

*“A planning obligation must be:*

- (i) relevant to planning;*
- (ii) necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms;*
- (iii) directly related to the proposed development;*
- (iv) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development; and*
- (iv) reasonable in all other respects.” (para B5)*

3.40 The new Circular illustrates the scope for planning obligations in relation to travel plans as referenced in para 15:

*“Where a proposed development would, if implemented, create a need for a particular facility that is relevant to planning but cannot be required through the use of planning conditions (see paragraph B51), it will usually be reasonable for planning obligations to be secured to meet this need. For example, where a proposed development is not acceptable in planning terms due to inadequate access or public transport provision, planning obligations might be used to secure contributions towards a new access road or provision of a bus service, perhaps co-ordinated through a Travel Plan.”*

3.41 The recent Circular and associated 2006 guidance<sup>52</sup> highlights the following issues as relevant to Travel Plans:

- **Policy**

Circular 5/05 stresses the importance of setting out clear planning obligation policies in DPDs and SPDs so that the requirements are predictable; these should be based on a clear and up to date assessment of the impacts likely to be caused by the development and derived from an integrated approach to the provision of infrastructure. In this context the use of standard charging is encouraged.

- **Timeframes**

Maintenance and management funding may be required through a planning obligation in perpetuity in certain circumstances, or include mechanisms to establish ongoing entities (i.e. management company or community trust). The scope for long term commitment to travel plan implementation is particularly useful to support residential travel plans and travel plans for phased /mixed use and multi-occupied developments where the developers liabilities need to be clear at the time the planning permission is given.

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<sup>52</sup> *Planning Obligations: Practice Guidance*, DCLG, August 2006

- ***Engagement with the community***

The 2004 Planning and Compensation Act introduced the requirement for Statements of Community Involvement in policy development and this is reinforced in the Circular. The Guidance also requires LPAs to take a number of “process” based actions such as informing and involving stakeholders, including discussion of planning obligations in pre-application meetings, ensuring necessary skills are available to undertake planning obligation negotiations, and making use of standard or model documents.

- ***Pump priming***

The Circular and associated guidance identify this mechanism as appropriate in relation to measures such as car clubs/bus services where payments help sustain the initiative until it breaks even or is incorporated into another funding stream.

- ***Pooled Contributions***

The Circular and associated guidance also amplify on the scope for using planning obligations to contribute to pooled funding for strategic initiatives. Contributions towards travel planning measures is supported subject to the infrastructure being related to the development and the scale of contributions being fair and reasonable. New or expanded public transport would fall into this category. Opportunities for pooled funding would be identified at the LDF stage where the cumulative effects of multiple potential developments should be assessed (see Transport Assessment Guidance above)

### ***Valuing planning obligations in England (DCLG)***<sup>53</sup>

- 3.42 This research comprised a national survey of local authorities in England undertaken in late 2005. It gathered data on: number of planning agreements relating to major and minor developments; extent of the application of standard charging to planning obligations; use of databases to record and monitor planning obligations; number and value of direct payment planning obligations; and number of in-kind planning obligations. “Green transport/travel plans” were included as a separate heading under the typology of “Transport and Travel Schemes” used by the researchers.
- 3.43 The research provides a useful context regarding the use of planning obligations generally:
- The proportion of planning permissions accompanied by planning agreements (including unilateral undertakings) has risen from 1.5% of all permissions in 1997/98 to 6.9% in 2003/04
  - Planning agreements are now attached to 40% of planning permissions for major residential developments; the equivalent proportion in 1997/98 was 26%

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<sup>53</sup> *Valuing planning obligations in England*, (research by Sheffield University and Halcrow Group Ltd), DCLG, May 2006

- The total value of planning obligations *agreed* in England for the year 2003/04 is about £1.9bn
  - £1.2bn is from affordable housing obligations
  - Transport and travel obligations contribute around £300m to the total
- The total value of obligations *delivered* in 2003/04 is estimated to be about £1.1bn, of which approx. £600m estimated value of affordable housing *delivered* through planning obligations
- Open space obligations are the most numerous, followed by obligations relating to transport and travel, community and leisure, affordable housing and education
- Affordable housing has the highest average value per obligation at just under £250,000, followed by education (£118,000), transport and travel (£83,000), community and leisure (£59,000) and open space (£25,000)
- Almost 62% of local authorities use standard charging for open space & environment contributions: the equivalent figures are 55% for education, 51% for affordable housing, 29% for transport & travel, 28% for community & leisure

3.44 A number of key messages can be drawn from the research that may inform the guidance on travel plans:

- Government concern at variation in practice and need for greater predictability suggests that planning obligations that relate to travel plans should be less variable while still addressing local circumstances. The research found that there were huge variations in the number and value of obligations secured within local authority families and regions and within individual local authorities; but transport and travel obligations display lowest variation in terms of number of obligations per authority.
- Need to take regional issues into account, given that:
  - The proportion of major planning permissions accompanied by planning agreements is highest in the South East (40%) and lowest in the North (7.5%).
  - The total value of planning obligations agreed by local authorities in the South East is over eight times higher than values in the North and North West
  - The average value of planning obligations in London and the South East was almost double the value of obligations in the North, with London authorities securing the highest average obligation value (£108,000), followed by rural towns.

3.45 While standard charging secures more travel obligations it does not impact on the value. The research found:

- Where standard charging is employed, more obligations of all types are secured, especially for transport and travel, and community and leisure

- Commuted sums secured using standard charging are nearly three times higher than in those instances when it is not used
  - Open space obligations where standard charging is used are almost double the value agreed without standard charging but standard charging has little effect on the value of transport and travel, and education obligations
  - Although there are many more transport and travel obligations obtained through standard charging than otherwise, around the same value per obligation is secured
- 3.46 Findings included evidence that process makes a difference - for example, 75% of respondents use an electronic database to record details of planning agreements. Authorities that use databases secure more agreements than those that do not.

**Securing Community Benefits through the Planning Process (Audit Commission)<sup>54</sup>**

- 3.47 This research investigated the factors that helped local authorities improve their approach to planning obligations and outlined recommendations that would help make planning obligations more consistent and more effective. This research included a clear analysis of current approaches to planning obligations, the most established being a detailed service-based policy but other authorities relying on an entirely case-by-case approach. One of the main drawbacks of the latter approach stems from the relatively weak position of the planning authority, which raises the likelihood of challenge by developers, thereby adding uncertainty and delays. Fixed tariffs and formulae are also used by some authorities e.g. the Milton Keynes Partnership, which has negotiated a fixed developer contribution per residential dwelling.
- 3.48 Key findings from the research:
- there is a wide variation in what councils secure under the section 106 process
  - some are missing out on opportunities to secure benefits through the planning process
  - those councils without a detailed policy on planning obligations secure substantially fewer community benefits, including affordable housing, than other councils in similar circumstances
  - councils that have improved have often done so in response to the government's recent focus on improving planning performance or other drivers such as involvement from their corporate centres
- 3.49 It concluded "*Councils now have an opportunity to improve their performance in this key planning policy area by following a relatively well-trodden path. The councils we visited that have substantially improved their approach to Section 106 agreements all had detailed policy, strong corporate commitment,*

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<sup>54</sup> *Securing Community Benefits through the Planning Process*, Audit Commission, August 2006

*experienced staff in the planning department and were motivated to some extent by the potential financial rewards: the opportunity to secure contributions towards local capital projects and affordable housing and, for some, the prospect of a planning delivery grant.”*

- 3.50 A number of recommendations in this research are of particular relevance:
- put in place detailed policy in supplementary planning documents (SPDs), describing the developer contributions that will be expected through planning obligations
  - engage chief executives, leaders and portfolio holders to integrate the current and potential contributions of planning obligations with the delivery of the community strategy
  - ensure that the other building blocks are in place to improve performance on planning obligations
  - test the potential impact of their policies on development viability
  - set up a system to deal with planning obligations and ensure that an effective process is in place
  - be clear about when and how communities are involved
  - improve transparency by publicising the results and outcomes obtained through planning agreements
  - manage the risks and monitor the outcomes to ensure that contributions are spent on what they were intended for in the agreed timescale
  - draw on the experience of other councils in similar circumstances
- 3.51 In order to help councils make these improvements, three guidance notes (tailored to different audiences and have different purposes) have been produced to be used in conjunction with recent publications by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)
- Value-for-money self assessment guide
  - Route map to improved planning obligations
  - Corporate awareness checklist

## Chapter 4: The operation of planning obligations

### A. Key findings from practice in the UK

#### ***Basis of analysis***

- 4.1 As part of the research case study authorities were asked about the use of section 106 obligations to secure travel plans and related features. Considerable variation in practice was found; details of some of these variations are set out in the more detailed summary of the case study authorities in Chapter 7. This chapter highlights some of the approaches taken. The analysis is based primarily on the review of actual and model section 106 agreements. Model or sample clauses from other authorities, particularly counties, were also reviewed and helped inform the current understanding of planning obligations in the context of travel plans secured through planning consent.

#### ***Definitions***

- 4.2 Definitions typically included the types of travel plans to be referenced (eg interim travel plan, framework travel plan, final travel plan, subsidiary travel plan) and in several cases included definitions of the basis for measuring travel plan performance, such as mode share, modal shift or excess vehicle trips. Fixed sums and the basis for calculating default payments were also included as definitions (see below).

#### ***Standard Clauses***

- 4.3 Standard clauses related most frequently to the timetable for the submission and approval of the travel plan and the use of limitations on occupancy or trading to secure a particular action. Several authorities included detailed clauses regarding standard charges for monitoring.
- 4.4 Only one authority utilised a “standard” contribution in respect of achieving sustainable transport. The London Borough of Islington identifies travel plan elements in an internal policy note, which also includes the requirement to seek *Contributions for Sustainable Transport Measures* through section 106 contributions from residential development where a full travel plan may not be required:

*“The recommended combined contribution for sustainable measures is £180 per residential unit. This will be utilised for marketing of more sustainable transport options including car clubs, and providing personalised and site specific advice and information.”*

*Developers may also be asked to contribute £2,000 for the conversion of an on-street parking space to a car club parking bay, or provide an on-site parking space for the car club accessible to all car club members.”*



**Timetables for submission and approval of the travel plan**

4.5 There was considerable variation in the link between the travel plan submission/approval and the commencement of development/occupation of development. The summary table below gives an indication of the range of approaches:

<b>Type of Travel Plan</b>	<b>Tied to commencement</b>	<b>Tied to occupation</b>
Draft Travel Plan	Prior to implementation	
Travel Plan	Approval prior to commencement	Submit within X months of occupation of X floorspace; not to occupy X floorspace until TP approved
Final Travel Plan		Submit within 4 months/6 months of occupation
Initial Travel Plan	Submit and agree prior to commencement	
Interim Umbrella	Approval Prior to commencement	Approval prior to occupation
Framework TP	Approval Prior to commencement	
Subsidiary T P		Approval prior to occupation of that part of development

**Restrictions on operations or use**

4.6 Restriction on occupation was the most common restriction of operations or use within planning obligations and the phrase “Not to occupy until/unless“ and/or “No part of the development shall be occupied until/unless” were used to secure the following:

- Measures/infrastructure scheduled to be implemented prior to occupation
- Implementation of the full travel plan
- Travel plan brought into operation, with all measures and infrastructure that TP proposes and identifies as being required
- Developer has entered into agreement with XXX for the provision of XXXX (car club) the cost of which being not in excess of XXXXX
- Travel Plan Coordinator employed and commenced responsibilities (see below)

4.7 A variation of this approach was taken by Wyre Borough Council in a case where they included a phrase “Not to commence trading...” until bus stops were provided and available for use.

## ***Default mechanisms***

- 4.8 Default mechanisms have been incorporated into planning obligations in order to confirm what would happen in the event that targets have not been met. These include:

### **Non-financial**

- Requirement to revise travel plan after each monitoring report that shows that current progress towards targets is not likely to result in the agreed target, and to continue this beyond the initial 5 year monitoring period if necessary
- In relation to a travel plan that sought to restrict construction traffic, the default was that the developer would lose site passes for construction vehicles if vehicle movement exceeded agreed levels
- Failure to achieve agreed targets could result in withholding further development permission or the requirement to fund further measures. The travel plan should explain potential contingency remedial measures.

### **Financial**

- Payment of a bond that covers the cost of the authority providing the measure themselves in the event of non-delivery (of say, a bus service), with the level of the bond set so that, if it is called upon, it will be at a greater cost to the developer, than if the developer delivered the measures.
- Payment to the Council (defined in the definitions) intended to be used for the purpose of achieving the modal shift; calculation to be based on a formula based on an absolute sum times the days in the “excess period” (period between a day when monitoring discloses that the development has exceed the target and the end of the monitoring period) plus an administrative fee.
- Pay the Council a sum calculated in accordance with a formula (defined under definitions), based on a fixed sum times the numbers of days the target is not met times the extent to which the target is not met) and used for the purpose of “improving sustainable transport options in the locality of the development...”
- If target for SOV reduction is not met, developer to pay £5,000 administration fee and £1,000 per employee short of the target, which will be used by the Council to help the developer achieve the required modal share.
- If targets/objectives not met or measures not delivered, developer to carry out remedial measures (including any sanctions if applicable) as set out in agreed travel plan.
- Payment of excess charges (per vehicle per day) for every additional vehicle that joins the road network (This is discussed in more detail in the Highways Agency’s case study).
- Payment of excess charges (per vehicle per day) for every additional vehicle that accesses a particular site over an agreed level. Income from

these charges are specified to go towards sustainable travel funding and it encourages modal shift.

- In relation to School Travel Plan, if over target level of access utilising non sustainable means, required to pay a charge of £2,502 per staff/ pupil – to be paid into account interest bearing and used to fund further Travel Plan initiatives as agreed with CC.

### ***Monitoring and Review requirements and responsibilities***

4.9 Mechanisms to secure satisfactory monitoring and reporting of monitoring information varied widely, and in some cases were closely integrated with the requirements and responsibilities of a travel plan coordinator. The following broad approaches can be identified from the case study information:

- Straightforward fee or charge (to be paid within X days of commencement or occupation) so that the local authority can either undertake the monitoring or support the Travel Plan Co-ordinator to carry out the monitoring. An example is £10,000 charged by Bracknell, to be paid prior to occupation.
- Surrey County Council requires developers or other planning applicants to contribute towards the costs of supervising and auditing travel plans for up to nine years after occupation. The fee is a one off payment, either £4,500 or £6,000 depending on the scale of development.
- Payment to the local authority, the sum based on the cost of officer time spent on monitoring (reflecting the cost to the local authority of providing that time - specified as £50 per hour).
- Collection of an up front sum (£2,500 standard amount in Essex County Council) to cover potential costs of monitoring and review, refundable at the end of the 5 year monitoring period provided annual reports have been submitted.
- Requirement that monitoring be undertaken and that a travel coordinator be employed, that an auditor verify the monitoring information, with the owner responsible for the costs of monitoring and auditing, and any remuneration and expenses payable to the travel coordinator and auditor.
- Requirement that travel plan coordinator be employed prior to occupation and throughout the monitoring period, with responsibility to carry out monitoring within one month of occupation.
- Developer required to undertake a travel survey with a minimum staff response rate of 75%; if response rate below this level the company will have to pay the Council £6,000 to undertake its own survey

### ***Iterative review to allow for future adjustment***

4.10 Wyre Borough Council has incorporated a clause within a planning agreement that spells out the requirement for revised travel plan each year within 3 months of the monitoring survey, to ensure that progress toward the five year target is achieved. The scope for further adjustment is addressed by an additional clause:

*“8. To continue the provisions of clauses 4 to 7 for a further three years should the target reduction of Motorised Road Vehicles share of 18% not be met within the five year period ...”*

- 4.11 Another approach was taken by Macclesfield in which the developer is required to provide approved measure at all times following their introduction until an alternative set of measures (as approved by Council) have been provided.

#### ***Funding/ employment of travel plan coordinator/other coordinating mechanism***

- 4.12 The requirement to employ a travel plan co-ordinator is often included in travel plans and planning obligations secure this through linking the requirement to stages of development. These included:
- Not to commence the development without firstly appointing and funding a suitably qualified travel plan co-ordinator
  - Requirement that travel plan coordinator be in place 6 months prior to occupation
  - Notification that a travel plan co-ordinator is in place not less than 1 month prior to occupation
  - No part of the development shall be occupied unless a travel plan co-ordinator has been employed by the owner and commenced his responsibilities; and the owner shall continue to employ a travel plan co-ordinator throughout the monitoring period
  - Establishment of a travel plan monitoring/co-ordination/steering group/committee prior to the occupation of the development.

### **B. Use of Performance Guarantees in the USA**

#### ***The concept of the Performance Guarantee***

- 4.13 The term “sanctions” was included in the earlier guidance as a generic term to describe mechanisms to help ensure that any failure to deliver agreed measures or outcomes could be remedied. Within this context it was suggested that sanctions could include payments before or after the planning approval that related to identified costs in the event of an identified failure. The earlier research found few examples of up-front payments to ensure performance and/or provide an incentive for delivery of the specified measure(s) or outcome(s) but recognised its potential as good practice.
- 4.14 In the UK the principle of seeking funds in advance via a section 278 agreement has been regularly employed in respect to off-site highway improvements: the principle of planning obligations is also well established as a way of securing related community benefits, including travel plans. However, the concept of financial guarantees to ensure the completion of all public and private improvements /works / measures /obligations/ conditions associated with the development is not common in the UK.

- 4.15 This concept may be particularly helpful in securing travel plans because it would ensure that the package of measures/agreed travel plan actions were carried out to an agreed timetable and in place before the development was occupied. It may not offer as much potential in relation to achievement of travel plan targets and outcomes.
- 4.16 This approach, the use of “Financial Performance Guarantees”, has been developed in the USA and is the subject of an American Planning Association Planning Advisory Service Report<sup>55</sup> updated in 2002. This approach has been in common use in the USA for decades; the report updates earlier guidance from the 1980s and found that communities from across America using Performance Guarantees were positive about their performance and consider them to be effective in ensuring improvements were completed to a satisfactory timescale and standard. The Guarantees related to both permanent and temporary improvements and to maintenance periods after the works were completed.
- 4.17 The “Financial Performance Guarantee” essentially requires that funds must be available to the planning authority *before construction begins* to cover all the costs of public and private improvements (and maintenance/defect liabilities) associated with the development. The funds are secured in such a way that they can be drawn down by the authority in the event of default by the developer. As the developer completes the work that is guaranteed, the amount of the guarantee is reduced though a minimum guarantee and/or defects guarantee may be retained. The staged return of the Performance Guarantee provides an incentive for improvements to be completed as early as possible.
- 4.18 In the USA the financial Performance Guarantee can take the form of a performance bond, cash escrow account, letter of credit from a financial institution, improvement credit agreement, and lien (charge) on property in the development . These financial arrangements are framed so that even if the developer defaults on development-related finance, the funds are still available to the planning authority to use to complete any unfinished improvements.
- 4.19 The Guarantee is written for a pre-established amount based on a calculation that is specified or negotiated that would cover all of the costs of carrying out the works if the developer failed to carry them out. The Guarantee also specifies what documentation is needed by the government in order to claim on the funds. The funds (or claim to funds) are released after the improvements or items are completed, inspected and determined to be completed in accord with the condition or legal agreement requiring them.
- 4.20 The Performance Guarantee provides a legal and financial mechanism that:
- Improves the ease and efficiency of achieving compliance with planning permissions or agreements (generally reduces the need for or cost of enforcement action)
  - Ensures necessary improvements are completed to an adequate standard

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<sup>55</sup> *Performance Guarantees for Government Permit-Granting*, Wayne Fieden and Raymond J. Burby, Planning Advisory Service Report Number 508, American Planning Association, August 2002

- Allows communities to have greater confidence that assurances and promises will be fulfilled (both because of the greater incentive to the developer and of the fallback funding available if the developer defaults)
  - Ensures adequate maintenance during a warranty period or other agreed period
- 4.21 The advantage of this approach is that it less complicated and less costly than undertaking enforcement and litigation action at some stage after the planning permission has been negotiated. Though adding an expense up-front to the cost of development, it gives the local authority confidence that works and measures associated with the development will be achieved.
- 4.22 The report includes a list of “Basic Rules for Administering Financial Performance Guarantees” that may provide examples of good practice for the UK, including:
- Where letters of credit are used, these should be irrevocable
  - Ensure the amounts of the Guarantee reflect the full cost to the government of completing the project, including accurate cost estimates and a margin of error
  - Ensure adequate timescale and renewability of the guarantee
  - Ensure that the basis for any government agency to collect should only be to certify that the developer is in default with no further burden of proof (bonds and escrow accounts held by outside agents may require a greater burden of proof and end in litigation; letters of credit more straightforward)
  - Allow staged releases as works are completed but retain 25% until project is complete
  - Prohibit occupation or sale of some part of the development until improvements are complete regardless of the size of the Performance Guarantee (suggest 10% of project be restricted in this way)
  - Require irrevocable permission for the government to perform required improvements if the developer defaults

## Chapter 5: Review of travel plan evaluation and monitoring tools

### Introduction

- 5.1 This chapter considers the issue of assessing travel plans. Assessment and evaluation takes place in different ways and at different points in the process. When a travel plan is submitted to the local authority it needs to be evaluated in some way to ensure that it is fit for purpose and likely to deliver the intended outcomes. This is the first evaluation.
- 5.2 Once a travel plan has been agreed tools are needed to ensure that effective monitoring takes place. Monitoring is needed to ensure that adequate data is collected at appropriate times and that measures are implemented as agreed. Later in the life of the travel plan repeat surveys will be required and this will not only inform activities relating to compliance with targets but also enable an assessment to be made of the relative effectiveness of different measures over time. The second, third, fourth etc. evaluation follows implementation of the travel plan.
- 5.3 Evidence from the research indicates that evaluation processes vary greatly across the country. Some local authorities use established tools such as the DfT Workplace Travel Plan Evaluation Tool; others use simple checklists. Elsewhere a more subjective judgement is made the outcome of which can depend on the skill and experience of the officer looking at the plan. Travel plans that have been effectively scrutinised at this stage are more likely to produce plans that deliver the desired outcomes in the longer term.
- 5.4 There are issues about the way in which data is collected across the country. The different methods used results in an inability to compare outcomes and effectiveness of measures. The lack of comparable data does not facilitate learning or sharing of good practice. Discussions are taking place to see to what extent different data collection systems could be aligned to overcome some of these difficulties.
- 5.5 In addition, it is evident from the research, both the survey questionnaire and the case study review that in practice little monitoring and evaluation is undertaken.

### DfT Workplace Travel Plan Evaluation Tool

#### *What is it?*

- 5.6 The Workplace Travel Plan Evaluation Tool is a software programme designed to assess the process and content of a workplace travel plan document. Alongside the software, advice on its use is contained in DfT's *Guidance on the assessment of travel plans* (December, 2005). It can therefore be used to assess a plan submitted with a planning application.

### ***Who developed it?***

- 5.7 In work commissioned by the then Department for Transport, and Local Government and the Regions, Napier University, Open University and WS Atkins reviewed travel plans produced by Government departments, in 1999 and 2000. They then used this as the basis for developing a methodology to assess travel plans. This was subsequently turned into a software programme produced by Atkins for DfT.

### ***How does it work?***

- 5.8 The software is intended for use by organisations developing or improving their travel plans and by local authorities assessing the quality of travel plans submitted to them. It is essentially a scoring scheme for a travel plan, with different weights attached to different components. In total there are 1,045 points available under 14 headings, such as “Plans and Measures”; “Monitoring”; “Targets in the travel plan”; “Travel plan co-ordinator”; and “Management support”. The largest share of the points (just over 25%) are allocated to the plans and measures themselves. The overall score of the travel plan is then calculated on a scale of 0 – 100. These scores correspond to predicted reductions in single occupancy vehicle trips that can be expected if the plan is implemented, with plans scoring 0 – 40 expected to achieve a maximum of 5% SOV reduction and those scoring 41 – 80% to achieve a 5-10% reduction. To achieve a predicted reduction in SOV of 10 – 30% plans must score 81 – 100% and include disincentives to control the use of car parking and incentives for using public transport.
- 5.9 In the context of a travel plan submitted for development at a new site, the guidance recommends that the local authority should determine the baseline trip generation for the site on the basis of trip generation at similar existing developments in the area. A less favoured alternative method is an estimate of trip generation derived from national travel survey and census data for the area. The guidance says that estimates should be further adjusted in the light of other factors such as the availability of parking (with higher availability leading to greater trip generation) and how urban the location is in relation to the wider area.

### ***How is it different from other products/systems?***

- 5.10 The tool is different because:
- The assessment of what the travel plan is likely to achieve is based primarily on the quality of the travel plan itself, albeit with some adjustments for site characteristics.
  - The tool offers a means of identifying improvements to travel plans, both when the plan is first drawn up and on an ongoing basis.
  - The tool could potentially be used in conjunction with TRAVL/iTRACE system or with the TRICS standard.



5.11 The DfT travel plan assessment tool is not the only one in existence. TfL and the Greater London Authority have developed their own assessment process, also based on a checklist principle, and are now refine this further. The Eco-Logica study discussed below also suggests an assessment that could be used as the basis for a British Standard in travel planning and this is being explored. A key feature of the DfT evaluation tool in comparison with the TfL/GLA tool and the one provided by Eco-Logica is that the DfT weighting system gives greater emphasis to the actual content of the plan in terms of the measures used. This is important because it is all too possible for organisations to complete the travel plan process without making a substantive difference to travel conditions and particularly to the balance of incentives for more sustainable travel and disincentives for car use.

#### ***Other checklist approaches***

5.12 A number of local authorities have developed simple check lists against which travel plans can be assessed. These include Surrey County Council and Sheffield City Council. More details of these approaches have been included as part of the case studies.

#### **TRICS® standard for monitoring development related travel plans**

##### ***What is it?***

5.13 This is a validation system to ensure that assessment of modal split and trip generation for development-related travel plans is made by a consistent survey methodology, which is also consistent with the methodology used to collect data for TRICS, the national development trip generation and analysis database. The purpose of the standard is to provide a straightforward means of assessing whether a development has met its travel plan requirements, with the emphasis being on delivering agreed targets. The standard is applied to assessments at existing sites and to estimates of what a travel plan is likely to achieve at a new site. It can be applied at sites for all types of travel plan – workplace, school and residential.

##### ***Who developed it?***

5.14 The standard has been researched by TRICS, in collaboration with the Association for Commuter Transport. The TRICS database is owned by a consortium of local authorities which commissions the consultancy JMP to run the marketing and administration of the database on its behalf. The standard has been developed in collaboration with the TRICS consortium, its members, ACT and the Highways Agency.

##### ***How does it work?***

5.15 The standard is designed to ensure that where travel plans are secured through the development process, then assessments - of predicted and actual trip

generation - are carried out both robustly and independently. For the standard to be met the assessment must be commissioned by a local authority and carried out by an independent specialist survey organisation that is approved by the authority (which could be the authority's own in-house team). Specifically, the assessment cannot be carried out by an organisation associated with the development site or a business employed by the organisation preparing the travel plan. The developer normally pays the cost of the assessment. The survey used must be validated by TRICS. Validation is free, since the information collected is then added to the TRICS database. The approved survey methodology is designed to complement existing TRICS methodology for collecting data on trip generation.

- 5.16 In general, three main types of survey are used:
- a 'before' survey at an existing site
  - an estimate of trip generation for new sites only; and
  - an 'after' survey once the travel plan has been in place for 1 – 2 years.
- 5.17 The before and after survey methodology is based on observational manual site counts (vehicles, vehicle occupancy and pedestrians), supplemented by interviews at cordon points where site conditions necessitate it – for example, where the situation is complicated by off-site parking locations or by unobservable public transport use. The trip generation estimates for new sites are made on the basis of existing trip generation databases and other relevant data such as lifestyle analysis. In general, such information provides a baseline estimate of the modal split and trips that would be expected *without* a travel plan. The figure for the likely trip generation *with* the travel plan in place is then arrived at in the light of the site's opportunities for trip reduction and modal shift. This is the information used in the Transport Assessment.
- 5.18 As part of the 'after' survey, information about the travel plan measures included in the package is also collected in a 'Travel Plan Record Sheet'. This was developed on the basis of research, by Napier and SDG, and is now standard practice for any TRICS survey at a site with a travel plan. It is envisaged that the information collected in this way will ultimately feed into a stronger evidence base about the effectiveness of specific travel plan packages in reducing car use. The assessment is intended to determine the predicted and actual effects of a travel plan for that site, rather than indicate what measures should be included. A key advantage of the standard for local authorities is that, because the assessment is independent, it avoids disputes about the reliability of data, whilst still requiring that the cost is met by the developer.

### ***How is it different from other products/systems?***

- 5.19 It differs from other products as:
- Estimates of what individual travel plans are likely to achieve will initially be based on site information and opportunities, rather than on an assessment of the travel plan itself (although this will change as data amasses on the effectiveness of travel plan packages).

- Modal split data is generally based on site access/egress counts plus representative survey interviews. Unlike methodology used by iTRACE/TRAVL (see below), it does not include an employee travel questionnaire. The fact that the TRICS assessment does not necessarily require a staff travel survey means it can be carried out without such extensive cooperation from the employer.
- The standard is an assessment system, rather than a project management system. It is specifically recommended for travel plans secured through development control, rather than voluntary plans where a company may opt to commission its own monitoring and review exercise. It can however, be easily applied.

### **Tools used in monitoring approach adopted in London: iTRACE travel plan management application, and iTRACExtra site audit and survey tool**

#### ***What is it?***

5.20 iTRACE is a software application that provides a project management tool – it primarily facilitates management and monitoring of travel plans across an area by a local authority, including across several authorities. iTRACExtra is an additional component of the iTRACE application which provides a standardised audit and survey tool for use by individual site travel coordinators.

#### ***Who developed it?***

5.21 iTRACE was developed by London Borough of Ealing and adopted by WESTTRANS (the borough officer joint working group on transport). Transport for London funded the development and the company iBase Systems Ltd was chosen to develop the software application. The travel survey information collected through iTRACE is compliant with information collected for TRAVL – the multi-modal travel database developed specifically for London by the London Research Centre in association with the boroughs. Responsibility for TRAVL rests with London Councils, which has contracted the consultancy MVA to run the database on its behalf.

#### ***How does it work?***

5.22 iTRACE stores detailed information about each travel plan in an area, including its associated planning requirements and its progress against agreed targets. A facility to add notes in text boxes and attach documents makes it possible to keep detailed records on individual sites. The application has GIS mapping information about each site, allowing the location to be viewed in relation to its transport linkages. The system is customised to the requirements of the government organisation using it: fields in the TfL version include the location's PTAL score and a 'best practice rating', which records the travel plan's stage of development.

- 5.23 Different users of the system have different levels of access: TfL is able to amalgamate data to determine modal shift across London achieved through travel plans monitored in the iTRACE system, while an individual borough is able to access and amalgamate data for travel plans within the borough. For a local authority, the system facilitates the enforcement of planning obligations by showing when inspections are due and providing an audit history that includes previous surveys and targets.
- 5.24 “iTRACEExtra”, in contrast, gives travel coordinators at individual sites access to their own detailed site survey information. There is an employee questionnaire that can be emailed to staff direct from the application and can also be analysed automatically. The information collected here is consistent with that collected using TRAVL survey methodology and ensures consistency in employee surveys across all authorities using the system. ITRACEExtra stores results of individual surveys containing personal information that is not accessible to officers at borough level.
- 5.25 TfL’s new guidance stipulates that where a workplace travel plan is required as part of a section 106 agreement, there will be a site audit and either an iTRACEExtra staff questionnaire survey alone or the full set of TRAVL surveys comprising staff and visitor questionnaire surveys; traffic counts; and surveys of parking and deliveries using TRAVL methodology. The iTRACEExtra survey can be undertaken by the organisation itself. The full set of surveys must be undertaken by a TRAVL - approved survey company. The decision on whether to use just a staff questionnaire survey or the full set of TRAVL surveys will depend on the nature and size of the organisation and will be agreed between the organisation and the local authority. In both cases the survey data is stored on the TRAVL database, in an aggregated form so that confidentiality is maintained, enabling comparisons of sites over time.
- 5.26 Where a travel plan is voluntary, borough officers are expected to advise the use of either iTRACE Extra or full standard TRAVL methodology (though there is no obligation for this). Other facilities available through iTRACEExtra include a travel plan template, which can also offer links to local policy documents where appropriate. The use of the application by individual sites is only possible where the site’s local authority is using the iTRACE application.

***How is it different from other products/systems?***

- 5.27 The key differences are:
- The iTRACE application is different from the other tools reviewed here in that it is first and foremost a project management tool.
  - The application itself does not currently make it possible to predict the trip rate at a proposed new development. However, such predictions can be made using the TRAVL database with which iTRACE is compatible. TRAVL also collects information on travel plan measures in place at existing sites, so providing a potential evidence base for assessing the effects of different travel plan measures in future.

- Through iTRACExtra, the application offers the capacity for travel coordinators to issue standardised surveys to the organisation's staff and to analyse the results. Where before and after survey data is entered it can provide a calculation of modal shift.
- The iTRACE system is designed for school and workplace travel plans and does not at present have a standardised template or survey for a residential travel plan.
- As with the TRICS standard, one of the key purposes of iTRACE is to produce consistent standardised information that enables assessment of travel plan impacts. In the London context, the information collected for assessment purposes for plans secured through planning mechanisms through TRAVL appears to be more comprehensive than that required by the TRICS standard, since TRAVL includes a full employee and visitor travel survey, and information on deliveries and parking, as well as site counts and cordon interviews. Consequently, TRAVL provides data about both the main mode of travel and the final mode, while TRICS provides data on final mode only.

### ***Reconciling standards and developing national benchmarking***

- 5.28 In the light of the rapid development of travel planning in London, recognition of the need for a national standard and the existence of two separate trip generation databases, Transport for London commissioned a series of studies by Eco-Logica to compare TRAVL and TRICS and make recommendations on benchmarking.<sup>56</sup> Eco-Logica examined the information collected for each database and also looked at the performance of the two databases at comparable sites in London.
- 5.29 The study found that both methodologies were robust and compatible and, in practical terms, gave the level of detail required for discussions for a Transport Assessment, development control and travel plan work. However, there were some significant differences in the methodologies used.
- 5.30 All TRAVL surveys included interview information whereas this was not the case for all TRICS surveys. TRICS classified mode of travel according to final mode for the journey made within key distances of the site – for example, a person who travelled by bus and walked less than 400m to the site would be classified as a bus passenger. TRAVL ascertained both main mode (by time spent travelling) and final mode. It also included information on origins and destinations enabling assessment of modal share for different travel distance bands.
- 5.31 In addition, there were many other differences in the definitions used in the two methodologies that contributed to differences in the form in which data was reported at comparable sites.

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<sup>56</sup> *Trip generation databases and a national standard for travel plans, a report for Transport for London (TfL)*, Professor John Whitelegg, Eco-Logica, Transport for London, December 2006.

- 5.32 Eco-Logica conclude that TRICS and TRAVL have similar ambitions to advance the cause of high quality travel plans through:
- A clear idea about targets, objectives and outcomes and the need to measure performance
  - A clear idea about baseline surveys and “down the line” surveys to provide a strong evidence base for performance management and further intervention
  - A clear link with a trip generation databases and survey methodology to make sure that surveys and the reporting of results are carried out to a high standard
  - A commitment to multi-modal surveys
  - A commitment to add travel plan data and outcomes to a trip generation database to encourage widespread adoption of challenging travel plan measures linked to outcomes
  - A commitment to make sure that travel plans are concrete and challenging and are implemented appropriately with clear organisational and financial resources and responsibility.
- 5.33 However, the study also finds that the co-existence of a London standard and a separate UK-wide standard for travel planning assessment creates problems in that it prevents comparison between sites in London and those elsewhere, and works against the legitimacy of a ‘gold standard’ for travel plans.
- 5.34 The study recommends that TRICS and TRAVL should take steps to eliminate methodological variation in the way their data is collected so that discrepancies between assessments from the two systems are avoided. In harmonising the two databases it proposes that they should adopt the same definitions, standards, templates, reporting and monitoring systems, commenting: *“Anything less will diminish the force of the Mayor’s transport strategy, create confusion and deprive the policy community at every level of database, site and travel plan comparability. This would be a major missed opportunity.”*
- 5.35 Eco-Logica goes on to make detailed recommendations for a harmonised system and the way in which this should operate. Specifically the data collection should:
- Be very clear about main mode and final mode of travel, especially for cycling and walking trips
  - Incorporate origin and destination information, making it possible to calculate trip rates by distance bands
  - Adopt formal land use planning use classes orders
  - Adopt comparable calculation factors such as trip rate per dwelling or per square metres of space
  - Adopt identical classification systems for road freight transport
  - Adopt identical trip rate and total trip rate definitions
  - Use raw data and avoid percentage increase numbers when two percentages are being compared (in other words use percentage point change rather than state a comparative percentage change – for example, an decrease from 60% to 30% would be a decrease of 30 percentage points rather than a comparative decrease of 50%.)

- Be fully compatible with iTRACE and reporting conventions.
- 5.36 The study concludes that it is essential for freight and logistics movements to be included in trip generation data, and that there would be significant advantages in adopting a classification system to match those used in national transport statistics.
- 5.37 London Councils has asked MVA to prepare a specification of the relatively minor enhancements needed to TRAVL to meet the Eco-Logica recommendations for a harmonised system.
- 5.38 The Eco-Logica report also recommends that a national standard for travel plans should be developed in co-operation with the British Standards Institute, and suggests a series of components that should be included in such a standard, detailing how each of these should be documented and recorded by TRICS or TRAVL.
- 5.39 The components suggested on the checklist are largely process-oriented, with the travel plan judged on whether it has completed each process rather than on the concrete outcome of that process, for example: "Identify those elements of the travel plan that should be provided by the Local Authority e.g. segregated cycle routes, improved pedestrian crossings, wider pavements, engineering to reduce danger/perceived danger of crossing roads, pedestrian crossing facilities." To meet the standard, a document identifying collateral measures is required.

### **A review of the methodologies and comments**

- 5.40 For an adequate assessment to be made of the long term effects of any travel plan it is important to collect appropriate data and to ensure that this is done consistently over time. It is essential to be able to compare data sets for movements to/from the same site. It is also important to have data collected in such a way that it can be shared and used in order to improve collective understanding of how travel plans work and what is effective to enable new travel plans to be based on a sound evidence base.
- 5.41 However, within these aspirations it has to be recognised that it may not be possible to collect identical data at all sites since the diversity of situations is enormous. Furthermore, the way in which data bases have been developed in London (through TRAVL) as opposed to elsewhere (such as through TRICS) is different, and based on different funding regimes. It therefore may not be possible to achieve a completely consistent approach. Work, however, should continue to bring the systems together as far as is practicable.
- 5.42 All travel plans should be monitored over time and authorities should establish both project management processes and performance information databases that are consistent to TRICS preferably across a number of local authorities as in London. Consideration should be given to adopting the additional requirements of the TRAVL and iTRACE to ensure consistent, appropriate and high quality information.

## Chapter 6: Results of the national questionnaire survey

### Introduction

6.1 The questionnaire was sent to all local planning authorities. Unfortunately given pressures on officer's time or concerns about the numbers of questionnaires being circulated the response rate was poor. A total of 51 responses were received, including 7 county councils who responded on behalf of their constituent district councils, out of 384 questionnaires distributed. In addition, 18 short responses from interested authorities were received, who were unable to complete the full questionnaire either due to time pressures or little information, but were keen to contribute. The tables below lists those authorities who responded by type and region.

### Geographical area of respondents

East Midlands	2
East of England	7
London	7
North West	5
South East	11
South West	6
West Midlands	6
Yorkshire and the Humber	7

### Authorities' geographical category

#### Mainly rural

- Broads Authority
- Dartmoor National Park Authority
- Dorset County Council
- Hampshire County Council
- High Peak
- North York Moors National Park
- Richmondshire District Council
- Tendring District Council
- Test Valley
- Uttlesford
- Wychavon

#### Mainly Urban

- Nottingham City Council
- Oxford City Council
- Portsmouth
- Reading Borough Council
- Sheffield MBC
- Southend Borough Council
- Tamworth
- Torbay Council
- Watford Borough Council
- Worcester City Council

#### Metropolitan

- Birmingham
- Coventry City

#### Council

- London Borough of Hounslow
- London Borough of Islington
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Borough of Westminster
- Leeds MBC
- Manchester MBC
- Rotherham MBC
- Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
- Stockport MBC



**Mix of urban/ rural**

- Bracknell Forest
- Chelmsford
- Cheshire County Council
- City of York Council
- Devon County Council
- Essex County Council
- Havant
- Hertsmere
- Kent County Council
- Lancashire County Council
- Lichfield
- London Borough of Hillingdon
- Macclesfield
- North Somerset
- Council
- Redbridge
- Scarborough
- Surrey County Council
- Tandridge
- Woking

6.2 One of the problems experienced with the survey was the lack of a responsible person who had access to the information required: only half of the respondents had a travel plan officer in post. Some of the poor response was considered by respondents to be related to staff shortages and lack of monitoring information.

6.3 The paragraphs below set out a brief description of the responses received in relation to the questions asked.

## **Section B: Information about travel plans in your area**

**1. In the last 6 years please indicate how many travel plans your authority has secured as part of a planning approval.**

6.3 A total of 65% of respondents had secured over 10 travel plans through the planning process in total since 2001 with 3 respondents securing over 200 in that time frame. However most of the respondents secured less than 10 travel plans per year. The authorities that had over 10 travel plans per year tended to have over 20 to 30 secured per year. There has been nearly a 3 fold increase in the number of travel plans secured through the planning process between 2001 and 2006 but in relation to the number of potential major applications that would fit the criteria as suitable for a travel plan this is an extremely small number. The potential for more travel plans through this route is substantial.

**2. In the matrix below please provide details of the total number of each type of development where travel plans have been:**

6.4 Across all respondents the planning application categories A1/ B1/ B2/ C3 and D1 have the most travel plans secured through the planning process related to them. However, out of those secured less than half have been implemented across all categories, though the reasons for this are unclear. A number of authorities have capacity and responsibility issues in respect of ensuring implementation on sites with no known end users: in a number of cases permission is given but the development does not take place; no authorities had details on sites still awaiting development. Of the 233 travel plans secured through the planning process for use class B1 only 84 have been implemented.

One authority is preparing a travel plan for a new town and it is intended that there will be a travel co-coordinator paid for by the developers and hosted probably by the County Council as highway authority. This co-ordinator will then deal with all travel plans.

**3. Please provide details of when your authority requires a transport statement/assessment and a travel plan for different types of development. Please give details of the size of the development and/or the minimum number of trips generated that triggers these requirements.**

6.5 Only 70% of respondents answered this question with a large number stating they had no specific requirements but analysed on a site by site basis or that in some cases requirements could be adjusted depending on the circumstances of

the site involved. Some of the respondents stated they discussed incoming applications at weekly planning meetings and made their decision then whether to request a transport assessment or a travel plan based on the views of the highways and planning officers and local knowledge. This lack of clear criteria could be a significant impediment to achieving effective travel plans.

6.6 Overall, authorities have used different measurements when defining their criteria:

- the size of the developments in hectares
- sqm/ sqm ground floor area
- units
- dwellings
- employees
- number of trips
- number of return trips
- per cubic unit

6.7 For a number of categories there was a medium figure:

- A1 1000sqm for both TA and TP
- A2 2500sqm for TA and over 50 employees for TP
- A3 &A4 & A5 1000sqm for TA and over 50 employees for TP
- B1 2500sqm for both TA and TP
- B2 4000 – 6000sqm for TA and 5000sqm for TP
- B8 5000sqm for TA and over 50 employees for TP
- C1 100 beds or over 60 vehicle movements per hour for TA and over 50 employees for TP
- C2 Over 60 vehicle movements per hour for TA and over 50 employees for TP
- C3 Over 50 units for TA and over 50 employees for TP
- D1 & D2& mixed use/ other dependant on size and location of development but for a number of authorities developments with over 60 vehicle movements per hour

One authority stated: Travel Plans will also be negotiated for all planning applications which are likely to have significant transport implications, including - all major developments and all smaller developments comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services which would generate significant travel in, or near to, Air Quality Management Areas, and in other locations where there are local initiatives or targets set out in the development plan or LTP for the reduction of road traffic, or the promotion of walking, cycling and public transport. This particularly applies to offices, industry, health and educational uses, for all new schools, and extensions to existing schools likely to have a material impact on traffic movements, comprising or having a significant increase in existing car parking provision at employment, retail or leisure sites, schools, colleges, hospitals or health centres and where the Travel Plan will help address a particular local traffic problem associated with a planning application, which would be likely to be refused on local traffic grounds. (This category may include smaller residential, commercial, service or educational developments below the relevant thresholds).

- 4. Please indicate the measures you have secured to improve sustainable transport provision as part of a planning permission, and which were part of a travel plan: specific S106 provision, specific planning condition; within a travel plan.**
- 6.8 The measures most often secured using a section 106 were walking improvements, cycling facilities, public transport improvements and infrastructure, management and control of parking, provision of travel information and provision of a travel plan coordinator. Planning conditions were used most often to secure walking facilities, cycling facilities and management and control of parking.
- 6.9 Within travel plans walking facilities, cycling facilities, management and control of parking, financial incentives to support occupiers, provision of travel information, travel plan coordinator, travel awareness schemes, car clubs and car sharing schemes were the most often secured.
- 610 As can be seen from the table below some measures are predominately secured through section 106 due to their specific nature e.g. off-site facilities for walking and cycling, public transport improvements and financial incentives to operators. Softer measures such as provision of travel information, internet services, car sharing schemes and other travel measures are more often incorporated into the travel plans.

**Total of authorities answering “yes”**

<b>Contribution to sustainable transport</b>		<b>Specific S106 provision</b>	<b>Specific planning condition</b>	<b>Within a travel plan</b>
1	Walking facilities – on site	11	13	10
2	Walking improvements – off site	18	9	4
3	Cycling facilities and improvements – on site (these could include showers and cycle parking)	14	16	18
4	Cycling facilities and improvements – off site (as above)	20	8	7
5	Public transport infrastructure	22	5	6
6	Public transport service improvements	24	6	6
7	Management and control of parking – on and off site	18	12	16
8	Introduction of parking charges	4	1	8
9	Financial incentives to operators – e.g. support for bus services/community transport	14	3	6
10	Financial incentives to occupants/residents – e.g. reduced cost tickets, bonuses for non-car use/ownership	11	2	11
11	Provision of internet services – to encourage home working etc	3	0	10
12	Provision of travel information – on occupation of development/on regular basis	13	7	22
13	Provision of travel plan co-ordinator	15	4	18
14	Other travel awareness measures, events etc	3	0	15
15	Car clubs	13	3	10
16	Car sharing schemes	10	3	20

- 6.11 Other measures secured have been: shuttle buses; employee induction travel packs; fleet management discussions; eco-driving information; eco-friendly pool cars; bicycle clubs and users group; promotion and the encouragement of flexible working. The use of technology such as the incorporation of traffic counters in new sites to assist with monitoring is also being undertaken.
- 6.12 Many authorities do not specify what needs to be within the travel plan but formulate them on a case by case basis with the occupiers. A number of authorities are in the process of tightening the requests for pre-application discussions to ensure the correct infrastructure is put in place so the site is fully accessible and future travel plans are workable once the site is occupied.
- 5. How many of your travel plans contained the following items; implementation plan/ agreed outcome targets/ agreed monitoring arrangements/ agreed enforcement measures/ measures to incentivise effective implementation/ managements structures regarding sustainability/ promotion of travel plan measures/ other?**
- 6.13 Only 45% of respondents filled in this question. Of those that did over 80% indicated that they had implementation plans, outcomes, monitoring and travel plan promotion within their travel plans. Of these authorities some stated these were standard in all of their travel plans.

One authority ask for an annual survey for all travel plans for the first 5 years of occupancy; each year discussing with the developer what their new targets will be for the following year. Targets were usually set between 5% - 10% over the 5 year period. If targets were not met they discuss with the developer why they have been unable to meet them. Failure to meet targets may also result in future applications being rejected. They ask all travel plans are supported by senior management. Promotion of Travel Plan measures is always written into the section106 agreement.

Framework Travel Plans have been produced at the planning stage by another authority for speculative developments, with draft targets / measures, clauses in the section 106 requiring the plan to be "upgraded" to a Interim Travel Plan and then Travel Plan at occupation / within X months. Clauses also relate to the need to agree targets, monitoring arrangements, remedial action, management arrangements etc. For Travel Plans relating to developments that have known occupiers these details have been included in Travel Plans and associated section106 Agreements.

- 6.14 Many of the authorities who responded stated that as travel planning is constantly evolving over time they are steadily raising the standards and requirements for travel plans. The inclusion of enforcement and incentives is also increasing as travel planning 'matures'. A total of 45% respondees included or are about to requirement inclusion of enforcement, management structures and incentives within travel plans. The few authorities that currently have enforcement in place use - financial penalties; enforce through refusal of future phases of development; or through the reduction in car parking spaces to force the occupier to act. However, the removal of car parking spaces can have a knock on effect on the surrounding area. One of the additional items requested by one authority in all its plans was "contributions to sustainable transport".

- 6.15 Some authorities stated that once approved the implementation of these travel plans was neither monitored nor enforced. Resourcing (or the lack of it) of the monitoring, penalties, sanction and incentives processes was seen by many authorities as a reason for not including them within travel plans as they have no resources to follow this through.

**Section C: How travel plans are assessed and secured in your area**

6. Do you have a formal mechanism for assessing the robustness of the travel plan?  
7. If YES - please give details of the method/ evaluation tool that you use: e.g. i-Traces/TRICS/other Evaluation Tool  
8. Are you satisfied with this approach?

- 6.16 A total of 22 out of the 41 respondents to this questionnaire had a formal method of assessing travel plans: 43% of the respondents used another method of assessing travels plans other than those listed. These were largely a selection of criteria decided by the authority from either experience, based on the available tools, but tailored for their situation or based on their SPG. In one instance an authority was using the criteria from both i-Traces and the DfT model to create their own hybrid version suitable for their needs.

- 6.17 The use of checklists was seen as helpful for both authorities and developers to start the process and give a general understanding of what could be included in the travel plan. However, only 40% were satisfied with the methods they used. The main reason for dissatisfaction was the limitation of the tools in terms of relevance to local area and qualitative aspects of the travel plan e.g. company enthusiasm and willingness to undertake works. Many respondents felt local knowledge was a more powerful 'tool' than those tools available: the latter give an overall score based on a combination of difference measures without understanding local circumstances and variance. The tools were also seen as only applicable to larger sites and not SME's.

A Council has its own contents criteria which it uses to evaluate travel plans against and this is provided to the developers at the start of the process: they can put more details but the criteria covers the essentials.

9. Which method(s) do you use to secure commitment to a travel plan and how many have you in each category?

- 6.18 Only .56% of responding authorities used section 106 agreements, the reasons given being:
- produces effective and operational travel plan
  - have robust clauses regarding targets, measures, monitoring, payment of fees/ financial contributions, penalties/ sanctions etc.
  - when penalties are included it gives assurance money will be available should it be required
  - it is easier to enforce
  - ensures the travel plan will happen and is implemented

- puts onus on developer to deliver commitments
  - has more 'legal force'
  - it cannot be appealed at a later date
  - they are the preferred method for major developments
- 6.19 Many authorities see section 106 being used for larger development and conditions for smaller developments. Conditions were used by 61% of respondents and were used where:
- easier to implement
  - allows greater involvement from all types of organisation
  - used if no monitoring fee required
  - the weight of section 106 was not needed
  - used for schools as the authorities were both the planning and the education authority
  - they have no fixed time limit
  - simpler and faster therefore don't impact of BVPI 109 targets
  - often used on small scale developments below thresholds
  - in one instance conditions are set up which requires developers to enter into section 106 agreement on travel plans if that is the only part of development needing a section 106
- 10. Do you have a standard form/or standard clauses for securing conditions/S106 agreements?**
- 6.20 A total of 16 out of the 32 respondents had a standard condition/ section 106 clauses in place, i.e. very few. For some authorities this was a starting point for discussions on the measures needed within the travel plan and would then be revised in light of discussions to be adjusted to suit the specific needs of the development.
- 11. Do your travel plans have a specific time life – e.g. 5 years? Does this vary depending on the size and complexity of the development proposal?**
- 6.21 The normal time frame on travel plans from respondents was either 5 years - though this depended on the nature and size of the development and whether it was phased or not - or for the life time of the development. In most cases in respect of life time travel plans conditions were used: it was said to ensure their continuation as they had no time limit. One authority mentioned it only had a timeline on the implementation of the travel plan with another stating a fixed timeline for monitoring of all their plans.
- 6.22 The consensus was that after 5 years the travel plan will be imbedded in the organisation and will continue on its own accord. A number of the authorities transferred the development to their voluntary travel plan network once the time frame through the planning system was complete to continue to offer support. When the development changes into the hands of a new occupier the travel plan is also subject to the requirement. To ensure its success one council mentions the formulation of a new travel plan for the site relevant to the new company.



- 12. Did any of your travel plans include financial penalties for: failure to deliver measures failure to achieve outcome targets?**  
**13. If so was this approach to achieving compliance a good one?**

6.23 Only 17% authorities had financial penalties in place for failure to deliver measures and 19% had penalties for failure to achieve outcomes; many authorities thought there was not enough advice and experience on this matter. The main penalty applied was preventing a further phase of the developments until travel plan targets were met for the previous phase, which has financial penalties for the developer, or to force the developer to do remedial works. Most of those that responded positively to this question did not as yet know if their approach regarding penalties had been successful as the travel plans had not been running long enough for it to be an issue.

One authority in their section 106 agreement clause relating to the Travel Plan states: *The Travel Plan will include... measures as are reasonable (including sanctions) to ensure the delivery of agreed measures and outcomes... At the time of preparation of this Agreement it is envisaged that remedial measures will initially include amendments to previously agreed measures and the introduction of additional reasonable measures aimed at further encouraging car sharing, bus use, walking and cycling to/from the Site and discouraging car travel to the Site. If, however, previously agreed measures have not achieved the agreed outcomes then the remedial action will include reasonable sanctions.* We (the respondent) have not yet reached the monitoring stage to determine whether this is a good approach.

6.24 Some authorities were concerned that penalties have not been legally tested. The failure to operate a travel plan under the terms of a planning condition would be a breach of planning permission and therefore subject to enforcement action and the maximum legal penalty but this to date has not been publicly enforced. A few of the respondent have penalties in their SPDs but see this only as a last resort. Penalties were seen to have the advantage of keeping the occupier in contact with the council and to continue being proactive about their travel plan.

- 14. Did any of your travel plans include financial incentives for: achieving delivery of measures achieving outcome targets?**  
**15. If so, was this approach to achieving compliance a good one?**

6.25 Only one authority used incentives to achieve measures and none for outcomes or successful approaches. The incentive used was not to have to implement expensive highways improvements: this could also be seen as a penalty. Again, as with penalties, there is felt to be little advice or experience about the most effective way of using them. A number of authorities were thinking about this in terms of reducing frequency or fee for monitoring if a travel plan was successful or reduction in business rates. However, a lack of resources was stated by some as being a reason not to use incentives.

- 16. As part of any Section 106 agreement do you secure financial contributions towards monitoring the plan?**

- 6.26 Out of 36 respondents to this question 17 never secure a financial contribution, 11 sometimes do and 8 always do.
- 17. Does the Section 106 agreement include provision for corrective action by the local authority in the event that targets/measures within the plan are not achieved/ delivered? Please give details.**
- 6.27 Only 11 respondents to this question had provision for corrective action in their section 106 and these included:
- discussions/ reassessment with occupier as to why targets/ measures not met and then drawing up an action plan to the organisation to implement
  - mediation to resolve issues arising from failure to meet targets
  - use of bonds to ensure compliance
  - implementation of further measures if targets aren't achieved
  - highways works, TRO's in surrounding areas, bus provision, improvement to cycling and walking links
  - removal parking spaces
  - prevention of further development if a phased project
  - penalties for the occupiers if overspill parking in to the surrounding area is a problem (fixed penalty in section 106)
  - planning permission be invalidated if substantial failure
- 6.28 This approach is being used more frequently on newer travel plans as knowledge and experience in this area is improving and travel plans are becoming more frequently used. Of those authorities that don't use section 106 or don't have corrective action within their section 106, negotiation with the occupier is used to support the occupier reaching their targets/ measures. The current monitoring arrangements for a number of the authorities meant that though they would have liked to include provisions, as they did not have the resources or systems available, corrective action was unlikely.
- 18. Has your authority taken corrective action? If so please indicate how**
- 6.29 Only 14 authorities out of 31 respondents had used negotiation between officers and developers to resolve issues regarding targets and out of those only 2 authorities had needed to do this more the 3 times. Over 50% of those have amended the plan and implemented additional measures. Negotiation often involved trying to obtain monitoring reports to provide the authority with sufficient data to assess the success of the travel plan. One authority had used negotiation by an outside mediator and 2 have taken enforcement action.
- One authority and the other parties found mediation a useful and positive process which overcame some entrenched and immovable positions on both sides.
- 6.30 One authority has drawn on a bond to implement a CPZ due to targets for a site not being met. Another authority has amended a travel plan's targets following a review for a site due to lower than expected occupancy levels.

### **Section D: Best practice and issues**

**19. Do you have any of the following?**

- 6.31 A total of 72% of respondents' had policies in the local plan/LDF to require and secure both transport assessments and transport plans for development proposals with an additional 10% having only transport assessments covered. As can be seen from the table below 84% of authorities use pre-application discussions. Many authorities see this as key to ensuring the travel plan is fit for purpose and that the developer/ occupier agree to the targets and measures set.

**Percentage (%) of respondents stating yes**

	<b>Policy, guidance and pre-application matters</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	Policies in the local plan/LDF to require and secure transport assessments for development proposals	86%
2.	Policies in the local plan/LDF to require and secure travel plans for development proposals	74%
3.	Clear mechanisms for linking the transport assessment with the travel plan to ensure a fully integrated approach	42%
4.	Criteria for deciding whether or not a travel plan is a requirement clearly set out in: a) Internal documents b) publicly available documents	52% 50%
5.	Supplementary Planning Guidance on Travel Plans	24%
6.	Requirement for transport assessments and travel plans to be submitted as part of a valid planning application	66%
7.	A lead officer on travel plan matters in your authority	62%
8.	Guidance notes for development control officers to secure travel plans	32%
9.	Opportunities for pre-application discussions on travel plans with key officers	84%
	<b>Partnerships</b>	
10.	A mechanism for engaging with local transport operators for negotiating/securing improvements to their services through travel plans	48%
11.	A specific mechanism (e.g. a forum) for securing the support and commitment of local developers to travel plans	28%
	<b>Assessment and negotiation</b>	
12.	An agreed methodology for assessing a travel plan submitted with an application	50%
13.	Procedures for working in multi-disciplinary teams, ensuring that transport planners, development control officers and others work together on travel plans for major developments	58%
14.	Effective negotiation procedures during the time that the application is being considered by authority	70%

	<b>Post determination monitoring</b>	
15.	Clear and explicit expectations about monitoring arrangements for individual plans that are understood by the local planning authority and the developer.	36%
17.	A data base of all your authority's travel plans and their progress against targets	32%

6.32 There is a strong correlation between authorities that use pre-application discussions and those that have effective negotiation procedures when the application is being considered. Almost all of the authorities with internal criteria also provided external criteria as they found it helpful for developers to be aware of the requirements prior to discussions/ applications and allow the travel plan process to move forward faster than would otherwise be the case.

6.33 Very few of the respondents had a database of all the authority's travel plans and their progress, though a number were aware that this was hindering the progress of travel planning in their area.

**20. Please indicate which factors have assisted or frustrated you when trying to secure a travel plan as part of the consideration of a planning application in the last 6 years.**

	<b>Assisted by presence of</b>	<b>Frustrated by lack of</b>
<b>Policy issues</b>		
Government policy, including PPG13	28	5
Government guidance	24	11
Regional transport strategies	15	6
Local Transport Plan – strategy and targets	29	1
Local Plan/LDF policies	23	8
Local authority corporate objectives	16	11
<b>Management issues</b>		
Attitudes of local authority senior management	16	15
Attitudes of local authority transport and planning officers	24	5
Attitudes of senior Members (portfolio holders)	12	13
Attitudes of local Members	11	12

Training for members on travel plans	4	20
<b>Practitioner guidance and training issues</b>		
Presence of protocols on when travel plans are required	12	18
Presence of internal procedures to secure travel plans	13	19
Presence of clear guidance on information, contents and targets for travel plans	15	16
Understanding of benefits of travel plans by officers involved in handling planning applications	18	12
Training of officers on securing travel plans	6	21
Multi-disciplinary (and if necessary cross authority) approach to securing travel plans	16	14
<b>Legal issues</b>		
Constraints of Planning Obligations legislation	9	12
Standard approach to conditions	12	13
Standard approach to S106 clauses	13	9
Attitude and training of legal officers	9	9

6.35 As can be seen from the table, policy, whether it is national, regional or local, was perceived by the majority of respondents as assisting travel planning, with many wanting the support of policy and guidance to ensure that their travel plans were robust enough to deal with challenges. The attitudes of other local authority transport and planning officers was seen by the majority as extremely important in ensuring that travel plans were an integral part of the planning process.

6.36 Many authorities felt their members and other officers (including legal) had no knowledge of this area and were therefore unable to understand the process: this lack of knowledge hindered the effectiveness of the travel plan work undertaken by the authority. Training was seen as much needed. Attitudes of officers and members at both the highway authority and planning authority level varied, according to a number of the respondents, with travel plan issues being influenced by other considerations relating to a development. Some of issues it was considered the authorities would always get greater priority. Again training was important.

21. Please indicate which factors have assisted or frustrated you when trying to implement and monitor travel plans in the last 6 years.

	Assisted by this	Frustrated by lack of this
<b>The plan itself</b>		
Clarity on the measures to be implemented	10	18
Clarity on the timescales and targets to be achieved	10	19
Clarity on the collection and interpretation of monitoring information	8	20
Clarity on mechanisms for dealing with under achievement of targets	3	22
Willingness/ability to modify and adapt plan in the light of experience on the ground	5	17
<b>Local authority resources</b>		
Presence of robust monitoring of all plans	3	27
Presence of dedicated S106 officer	6	20
Presence of dedicated travel plan officer	19	12
Ability/willingness to pursue non-compliance	2	26
<b>Resources of the developer and other parties</b>		
Commitment of the developer	8	21
Presence of a travel plan co-ordinator	11	17
Commitment of transport operators	13	13
Commitment of occupiers/residents	5	18

6.37 As can be seen from the table only travel plan officers were seen to be of assistance overall by the majority of authorities. In terms of the commitment of the developer a number of authorities have had positive experiences but it was wholly dependant on the individual developer: some developers were apparently very committed at the planning stage but then did not co-operate when it came to implementation.

6.38 There was frustration about the lack of clarity of time frames for many authorities in respect of speculative development and developments with no known end user.

6.39 Many authorities commented that too few of their travel plans had reached the monitoring/ review stage to comment within this section but a number saw

problems in the future. The rising number of travel plans being created and needing monitoring would impact on resources, even if some resource is obtained from the developer/ occupier.

**22. How would you summarise your authority's approach to and success with travel plans over the last 6 years.**

6.40 Most authorities talk of their improvement in travel planning over the last 6 years and how more formal mechanisms are now being put in place to help them achieve their goals. An improved knowledge through experience is allowing authorities to improve the way they work, and the quality of the plans, and therefore the success of their implementation. A number of the authorities are currently producing SPD or guidance documents to assist them to improve further. Many more authorities are promoting and working with stakeholders to achieve travel plans either through the planning process or voluntarily. Developers and occupiers are now more aware of travel planning and as such are more willing to be involved.

"The quality of plans we receive is slowly improving but generally there is an unwillingness to use positive language to be clear on measures and commit to them."

6.41 A lack of guidance, advice, time and resources restricted many authorities moving as far forward on some of these issues as they would have liked, though a number thought that the theory was in place. This impacted on the monitoring and enforcement arrangements. Though the authority may have one or a number of interested/ enthusiastic employees, they have found putting effective travel plans into action frustrating. Intermittent resources have created problems for some authorities, with a number losing or having insecure funding and no longer pursuing travel plans or monitoring those already in place.

6.42 There was concern by a number of the authorities that they are good at securing but weaker at implementing and reviewing travel plans which limits their success: this was seen to be due to a lack of support internally and firm government guidance. One respondent stated that the onus of enforcement was on the council due to the lack of specific legislation requiring the operation of a travel plan in new developments. Therefore as the number of travel plans has increased so has the authority's workload in terms of monitoring and enforcement.

One council stated that they require travel plans to state they will monitor and provide modal split figures annually to the council, but in reality they have never had any returns yet and don't have the time to follow up.

6.43 A number of authorities mentioned the issue of the two-tier system as they were not both the highway authority and the planning authority: this therefore sometimes involved four parties in the discussions concerning a travel plan's inclusion in planning agreements - the County Council, the local authority, the developer and the public transport provider. This further complicated the issue. Communications between the different tiers also could create problems with some authorities in an area being "ahead of the game" and others not being involved, with the reliance on the county to provide the legal standing for the travel plans.



The impact of planner's stringent turn-around targets on planning applications (BVPI 109) meant that travel plans through planning have been sidelined in the development process in some authorities.

- 6.44 The effectiveness of travel plans on the ground seems, from the responses, to be based on the enthusiasm/ ethos of company or member of the company involved. For example, those companies with a wider corporate interest or having a travel plan champion within the company were more responsive. In a number of cases the authorities were unwilling, due to the economic situation of their area, to push too hard for travel plans as they wanted investors and businesses to come into their area and did not want to set up extra hurdles. There was little evidence of the financial benefit to the company of having a travel plan in place, both in terms of customer and staff opinion, other than large companies which wish to employ particular sections of the workforce.
- 6.45 A number of the authorities' respondents found it frustrating that some developments, no matter what the content of their travel plan was, were given a high priority and approved. The difficulty in keeping up to date with the start of construction and use of the site was, for some authorities, an issue due to poor communication internally and from the developer: once the occupier was in place locating the correct person from the occupier to discuss the travel planning arrangements was also difficult. Authorities were also concerned that some of the travel plans obtained with conditions a number of years ago, with less knowledge than they have now, are unsound and are not enforceable. There is also a lack of enthusiasm to enforce conditions within some authorities.
- 6.46 Some authorities have set up a system whereby all new travel plans are passed through the travel plan co-ordinator for comments prior to approval, others attended their weekly planning officer meetings between planning and highways officers. At these events they discuss all possible applications which could involve a transport assessment or travel plan and agree how to move forward on these applications. One authority has linked its Air Quality Management Areas to travel plans and all those applications within an AQMA will need a travel plan.
- 6.47 A number of particular initiatives/ systems have worked well for some authorities such as: specific websites for both travel plans and travel information, road shows, front loading of applications with a lot of pre-application work and additional marketing of sustainable travel. Voluntary schemes are being promoted, which can link travel plans secured through the planning process into such schemes as car sharing events, park and ride schemes, and encouraging the use of sustainable transport through health initiatives.

**23. Please give us what you consider to be the critical factors in delivering a successful travel plan for a major development.**

- 6.48 The critical factors were considered to be:
- Awareness of benefits of travel plans and to transport infrastructure etc.
  - Base line survey, an understanding of existing situation
  - Best practice examples
  - Car park management
  - Carrots and sticks

- Clear guidance on requirements/ enforcement
- Clear relationship between developers and occupiers
- Clear targets
- Clear timelines
- Conviction of officers and members plus improved training
- Commitment of resources for the life time of the travel plan by developer
- Dedicated TP co-ordinator
- Dedicated developer/ occupier contact
- Developer commitment
- Early/ pre-application discussions
- Effective marketing and advertising of travel plan
- Experience and knowledgeable staff
- Financial and time resources – for set up, implementation and monitoring
- Flexibility of travel plans to fit situation
- Reliable car alternatives already in place
- Implementable measures/ targets
- Information on alternatives to car travel given to residents / workers.
- Integral to development
- Joint working within the authority – protocols in place
- Management structure of the travel plan is set out clearly from the start
- Monitoring – clear and comparable with set time lines in place with quality monitoring reports
- National and local policy
- Network for voluntary travel plans that company/ community can join to sustain their travel plan post the end of the planning requirements
- Not settling for second best – aiming for best travel plan
- Political support both local and national
- Regular meetings with all involved through the development of the travel plan
- Right location in terms of accessibility
- Robust/ appropriate S106 and conditions
- Sanctions/ penalties clearly set out for non delivery and the ability to enforce them
- Senior management support
- Site access and layout planned effectively to enable travel plan to integrate with the site e.g. cycle lanes/ walking routes
- Site location
- Stakeholders working together
- Travel plan within corporate aims – for both authority and developer
- Well written clear travel plan with defined measures/ targets and provision for implementation, monitoring and review
- Whole life time of travel plan management issues clear and allocated
- Wider local network to ensure sustainability
- Without continual appraisal through the annual monitoring, the TP is ineffective and largely just a paper exercise.

“Gateshead college has 3 sites - they've split off 2 units from their main site and have developed TP's for these smaller units and have submitted a draft for the future main site at the Gateshead Quayside. They are good examples as they realise that without putting the initiatives in place their students won't want to go to the new site and choose one of the other colleges in the region instead.”

**24. What do you consider to be the key obstacles to achieving successful outcomes with travel plans? How do you consider these should be overcome?**

6.49 The key obstacles were identified as:

- Alternatives to the car in place
- Baseline research on site so able to monitor travel plan, can be overcome through improving data collection by gathering multi modal counts for sites which currently have travel plans and cross correlating
- Businesses need incentives
- Car use culture, possible use of workplace parking charges in conjunction with off site parking restrictions, taxing car park spaces
- Change in ownership of sites/ speculative developments
- Companies informing employees when they start that there is a travel plan in place and providing them with travel information
- Controlled parking on-street in the vicinity of the site thereby preventing overspill parking demand from the development: this is insurmountable in many cases
- Correct contact within development (developer/ occupier etc)
- Developer commitment over both short and long term, lack of understanding from developers, could be encouraged through reduction in Business Rates for those who exceed targets
- Developer obstruction
- Difficulties in enforcing travel plans - a lack of 'teeth'
- Disinterest of public transport operators
- Getting joint co-operation and commitment on multi-occupier sites and residential sites
- Inaccessible sites
- Inadequate resources for effective monitoring and enforcement
- Incentives for building occupiers to achieve the plan's targets and appropriate sanctions for under achievement: need legal changes to allow local authorities to offer incentives and impose penalties.
- Incomprehensive Travel Plan database
- Inflexible approach – need to be able to change if situation changes
- Integration with corporate core policies
- Investment by LA in implementation and enforcement
- Involvement of all stakeholders
- Knowing when occupation takes place
- Lack of convincing economic business case, need information from DTI on efficiency saving from travel plans
- Lack of cross organisation working and co-operation
- Lack of enforcement guidance, actual enforcement and power to enforce

- Lack of example by planning authority/ commitment by senior managers
- Lack of guidance from central government and therefore lack of continuity between authorities
- Lack of joined up thinking as the responsibility for the site moves between developers, selling / letting agents and occupiers - clearly defined structures identifying ownership of responsibility throughout the life of the travel plan
- Lack of knowledge in the legal profession and advice on what can be secured through S106, S106 agreements taken over by other priorities e.g. affordable housing
- Lack of knowledge of travel plans within authority both officers and members and in general
- Lack of wider infrastructure support i.e. cheaper to drive, buses not accessing sites, lack of cycle lanes, etc
- Little best practice/ advice/ guidance on how to secure through S106 and what can be secured and on remedial action e.g. clear policy on using financial sanctions to ensure outcomes
- More money into public transport to improve non car infrastructure
- Need champion/ support as in school travel plans
- Need for effective negotiations with developers on the production and implementation, at the outset of the development process.
- Need to promote and have advice and market best practice to show businesses it is good value
- No clear monitoring structures in place
- No consistency across country/ regions on thresholds, measures, targets, monitoring etc and the use of travel plans
- No overt government lead/ legislation/ guidance especially on targets and remedial action etc
- Non commitment from end users of a development difficult to overcome particularly if the end user is not the developer or party to a section 106 agreement: need incentives for end users
- Not early enough intervention at start of planning process
- Not enough officer time to set up and then monitor and enforce
- Not knowing end user at the time of planning
- Occasional planning inspectorate decisions that run counter to government sustainable transport policies
- Once company champion leaves have to re-start process within company
- Political will
- Smaller developers still don't know what its all about: can be difficult to get them to do anything; need sufficient support, promotion, endorsement of the TP
- Taxable benefits – employer supplied discounted ticketing/ cycle mileage rate
- Tick box system in place need innovative ideas
- Tokenistic travel plans submitted
- Travel plan needs to be fully integrated into the company through being in job application pack etc. Not an add on
- Two tier planning – working with many parties with different skill and a lack of communications between the tiers

- Unresponsive businesses e.g. SME's in particular need help to coordinate travel plan measures - Government grants to install basic sustainable travel infrastructure.

A number of the respondents wanted information on funding sources/ streams to enable them to provide staffing for a travel plan post.

## Chapter 7: Case studies

### A - Birmingham City Council

#### 1. Overall approach

##### ***Travel plan experience and effectiveness***

- 7A.1 Birmingham was one of the initial case study authorities in the 2002 national guidance report on travel plans and the planning process. In the last six years, the number of travel plans secured as part of a planning approval has been fairly consistent, ranging from 30 – 45 a year, and amounting to 215 in all. Some 90 have been implemented to date. Travel planning has been approached through a scheme called Company Travelwise. Organisations signing up to this gain access to considerable support. The majority of those now joining (perhaps 60%) do so through the planning process.
- 7A.2 The authority does not have clear evidence on the effectiveness of travel plans, and monitoring is acknowledged to be the weakest aspect of their approach. Nevertheless, a number of organisations have reported a decrease in car use, including WS Atkins (15% reduction in four years) and the Highways Agency (10% reduction in car use in one year). The authority's own travel plan cut car commuting by 10%, with the Transportation Strategy section achieving a 15% cut and the Economic Development section a 20% cut. Results from Travelwise members have not been systematically collated, though the authority offered to collate data for the case study. The authority does, however, report on the number of employees covered by a travel plan (see below). There is no enforcement.

##### ***Objectives and commitment***

- 7A.3 The West Midlands LTP (2000) included a target for 40% of employees to be covered by a travel plan by 2006 and 50% by 2011. The second West Midlands LTP contains a less ambitious target, which has come from the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, that by 2011 30% of all employees should work in organisations covered by travel plans. The LTP comments that the earlier 50% target was unrealistic because of diminishing returns once larger organisations are already signed up. However, Birmingham on its own has already achieved the 30% target.
- 7A.4 The LTP1 listed three overarching objectives:
- A - To ensure that the transport system underpins the economic revitalisation of the West Midlands metropolitan area
  - B - To ensure that transport contributes towards social inclusion by increasing accessibility for everyone
  - C - To move towards a more sustainable pattern of development and growth
  - D - To improve safety and health for all
- The travel plan target was listed under objective C.
- 7A.5 The city has a major schools rebuild and refurbishment programme and is progressing school travel planning through this. Sustainability is high on the political agenda with all politicians expected to show green credentials. Both

senior officers and politicians are supportive of travel planning. The response from companies to travel planning varies: but generally those that do most are those meeting a planning condition. Pressure for travel plans does not generally come from local residents, though they may raise issues about traffic in relation to applications. For big development proposals; officers can be called in to talk to residents about travel planning.

**Key partners**

7A.6 Key partners are the passenger transport executive CENTRO and the operator Travel West Midlands. Within the city council, the cycling officer and highways engineers can sometimes be involved in the travel planning process. Although there is often liaison with the developer in the early stages, the occupier is viewed as the key partner in the process, since it is the occupier who signs up to Company Travelwise. Officers seek to engage companies well ahead of relocation – e.g. up to a year before it moves into the new development. This might include, for example, face-to-face meetings with staff to discuss travel arrangements. More recently there has been partnership with a car club provider as a car club has been secured through a section 106 agreement.

**2. Policy and process for securing travel plans**

**Supplementary planning guidance and documents**

7A.7 The requirements for travel plans secured through the planning process are not included in supplementary planning guidance or documents, and there are no plans to write guidance of this nature. On big applications the authority normally expects a transport assessment. However the TA is not explicitly linked with a travel plan.

7A.8 The authority has recently produced draft guidelines on parking, which would provide a support document to the development plan (rather than a Supplementary Planning Document). The new standards liberalise parking. This follows the relaxation of Government guidance on parking ratios in PPG3. In the case of residential development the proposed standards can be seen to be relatively liberal, as follows:

Area 1: Core of city centre	1 space per dwelling
Area 2: Outer parts of city centre	1.5 spaces per dwelling
Area 3: Rest of city	2 spaces per dwelling

**Thresholds and requirements**

7A.9 The Travelwise guidance document given to affiliates explains that development officers will consider attaching a [Travelwise] planning condition in the following cases:

- Where the development increases car journeys to the premises
- If the development results in a reduction in car parking spaces on the premises
- If there is potential for a significant number of patrons or visitors

7A.10 There are no formal thresholds for requiring a transport assessment or a travel plan. The authority prefers to maintain flexibility and make these requirements when it judges them to be appropriate. Each case is assessed on its merits and

where necessary development control officers discuss the attachment of the condition with the company travelwise officer. Organisations are not generally expected to submit written travel plans prior to occupation and the Travelwise programme in any case aims to achieve 'plans on the ground' rather than 'plans on paper'. Expectations placed on companies preparing travel plans will vary according to the degree of traffic generation: companies with more than 100 employees are generally expected to do more than smaller ones, but these are expectations rather than formal requirements.

### ***Process and responsibilities for securing plans***

7A.11 The planning condition stipulates that the building will not be occupied until the occupiers have affiliated to Company Travelwise in Birmingham. To affiliate, the occupier signs a certificate, containing a pledge to work towards reducing the environmental and congestion impacts of the organisation's transport activities with particular reference to employee travel. A senior person is expected to sign on behalf of the organisation.

7A.12 In some cases organisations applying for planning permission will also choose to write a travel plan – for example, during the application submission stage or shortly afterwards – but this is not generally sought by the authority. When this happens a copy of the travel plan will be sent to the travel plan officer in the council who will be asked for comments before it is approved as part of the application. One of the actions included in such travel plans is nearly always a recommendation to join Company Travelwise.

7A.13 In general, for most developments there will be someone involved who is already familiar with the city's requirements in relation to Company Travelwise, so raising awareness of this among developers at an early stage in the process has not been necessary.

7A.14 In joining Company Travelwise, organisations gain access to considerable support that will help them to improve sustainable travel and promote it to their staff. Each organisation receives a pack divided into sections with support materials such as:

- Copies of the employee travel survey and monitoring forms
- Information on public transport routes, including park and ride facilities in and outside the Centro area
- Information on cycling, cycle routes and parking
- Details on how to establish a bicycle user group
- Employee Discount Cards
- Copies of offers from other companies supporting the scheme.

7A.15 Travel pass reductions are available to employees of member companies, including a 50% reduction in certain circumstances. Additional packs from Centro and Travel West Midlands provide more information and special offers. Centro has its own Travelwise team and offers Travelwise members a comprehensive range of services, including:

- Bespoke public transport information for the site – e.g. timetables, maps, special offers and visitor guides
- Advice and support on improving public transport to the site
- Staff travel awareness sessions to promote public transport



- Discounted annual season tickets and one day passes
- An individualised journey planning service via Centro's website
- Internal communications support, for example assistance with articles for staff newsletters
- Public transport updates for the organisation's Company Travelwise notice board
- Assistance with office relocations

7A.16 What initiatives companies' pursue is a matter for their own choice. The scheme relies on carrots rather than sticks and on aiding and supporting organisations that are acting on a voluntary basis.

### ***Evaluation of incoming travel plans***

7A.17 As there is no requirement normally for written travel plans, evaluating them is not an issue and the authority has not made use of the DfT Travel Plan Evaluation Tool. However, the guidance offered to companies outlines key stages for successful implementation of Company Travelwise as follows:

- Affiliation
- Appointing a staff coordinator
- Undertaking an audit of existing facilities via a short company questionnaire
- Staff travel survey
- Developing ideas based on the results of the survey and the action points
- Implementing the ideas and initiatives [many examples are suggested in Travelwise guidance]
- Distributing information in the Company Travelwise and Centro Packs
- Holding information days
- Consultation with employees
- Presenting the plan to your employees
- Implementation – monitor – review – update

### ***Targets and monitoring process***

7A.18 The Travelwise literature states that the city council aims to reduce employee car commuting levels by 10% in each affiliated company (e.g. from 50% to 40%). It also aims to have 45% of affiliated companies undertake its employee travel survey and to maintain this figure. Companies are encouraged to carry out a survey at the start of their membership, using a standardised survey form provided to them. Amendments and additional questions can be included to suit the organisation's needs. The company sends out the survey to its staff and the local authority analyses it and produces a comprehensive 40-page report, with recommendations and action points. This is currently being adapted for email distribution. The intention is that the organisation should carry out the first survey on occupation and subsequently repeat this within two years. However, getting in repeat surveys has proved difficult.

7A.19 Officers were not familiar with the **TRICS/ACT standard** for assessing travel plan impacts; some would support the introduction of a standardised approach. However, there was some caution as standardised methodologies may turn out to be less effective than that which the authority is currently using.

7A.20 The Council makes use of the TRICS database for travel demand forecasting, alongside another database, Generate, which is considered well suited to the West Midlands. This is used to model demand for new developments. Where a transport assessment is sought the Transportation Department will also seek to agree the scope of this with the developer, including what assumptions are made about the effects of travel planning. For transport assessment the authority currently follows IHT guidelines, but will in future be using the new Department for Transport / Communities and Local Government guidelines.

### **Funding for monitoring**

7A.21 Developers are not currently required to pay a sum for monitoring of the travel plan and the local authority undertakes analysis free of charge. It is considered that such a requirement would compete with other demands on developer contributions such as affordable housing, public realm improvements and pedestrian crossings, and could be to the detriment of these.

### **Use of conditions, agreements, contributions and sanctions**

7A.22 The authority's **standard condition** is as follows:

*The building(s) shall not be occupied until the occupiers of the premises have affiliated to "Company Travelwise in Birmingham". In the event that the occupiers cease to affiliate to Travelwise they shall come forward, within three months of them ceasing to affiliate to Travelwise, with further proposals for decreasing reliance on the private car and continuing staff use of alternative means of transport, such proposals to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter implemented.*

**REASON:**

*In order to decrease reliance on the private car and encourage the use of public transport.*

7A.23 Development control leads the process of attaching the condition to an application, but take advice from relevant expert consultees within the authority including Highways Development Control and Transportation. When a condition is imposed a copy is sent to the travelwise co-ordinator and it then becomes the responsibility of the Travelwise team to ensure the condition is adhered to. Companies are expected to remain active. The level of involvement expected is based on the number of employees in the company and is at the discretion of the travelwise officers.

7A.24 Travelwise guidance to affiliates states that an organisation that fails to comply with either aspect of the planning condition (i.e. affiliating or producing its own proposals for reducing car use) will be referred to the Planning Authority for necessary **enforcement action**. Officers were of the view that the condition has provided 'a bit of back up' which has been effective in persuading companies to come on board, and that in seven years there has been no need to resort to enforcement. The threat of enforcement is the only 'sanction' used in relation to the condition. There are no sanctions attached to failing to meet targets.

7A.25 The authority may take a **contribution** for travel related purposes such as public transport or for infrastructure such as a pedestrian crossing. There is no standard method used for calculating this. In the past contributions were made in lieu of parking spaces in the city centre. Whilst arguments for standard contributions can be made, these were not supported by the officers. There was concern that if

developer profit is eroded too much – e.g. to single figures – then the developer will walk away from the development opportunity. For this reason the local authority must be given discretion to decide its own priorities and negotiate appropriate contributions.

- 7A.26 Some guidance on contributions is, however, included in the draft guidelines on car parking, which says that it is likely that contributions to public transport will be sought for commercial development in the city centre and for high trip-generating developments in locations poorly served by public transport. Such contributions may be pooled. The draft guidance also proposes to *“allow developers proposing office schemes in the City Centre the option of securing more car parking than the maximum normally allowed in return for a payment to be used for transport improvements, in particular public transport.”* (this is not felt to be consistent with best practice)

***Involvement of members, stakeholders and transport operators*** [2.12, 2.13]

- 7A.27 Members are only peripherally involved in the use of the Travelwise condition. They only see 10% of applications and it is a rarity for decisions to be overturned. Centro will occasionally be consulted. Both Centro and Travel West Midlands have been highly active in working with companies to support their travel planning, and there is an excellent working relationship with the city’s travelwise officers.

**3. Implementation**

- 7.28 Once the condition has been imposed the travelwise co-ordinator takes responsibility for ensuring implementation takes place. The officers seek to stay in touch with the company/occupier and be aware of progress on the development. Correspondence on each organisation is kept on record. There is a manual filing system and a computer database together with an email based mailing list for affiliates.
- 7A.29 The Council does not have direct experience of iTRACE but considers incorporation of GIS mapping data would be a useful addition to the current system. It would be essential for iTRACE to be compatible with other systems used by the planning department such as OCELLA, the planning database currently used by the authority to make it viable for the Council to consider.
- 7A.30 Key statistics about the progress of the Travelwise programme have been reported by the travelwise team to senior managers, and through them to members, on a fairly regular basis.
- 7A.31 Assessment of travel plan effectiveness should ideally take place around two years after occupation but has been frustrated by companies’ reluctance to carry out the second round of travel surveys. In general, the priority of the scheme has been close involvement and action on the ground rather than monitoring. The benefits of the programme have been very warmly received by companies, and it has given them a more positive view of the city council. The travelwise team ensure the quality of the monitoring data and encourage its collection, as far as they can, by supporting the process with forms and analysis.

#### 4. Enforcement

- 7A.32 Beyond signing up to the programme and being active in it, organisations are not tied to a set of agreed actions or outcomes, and so it cannot be said that outcomes have been delivered or not. The partnership, carrot-led approach is seen to be positive and productive. Travelwise is seen as an aiding process. Expectations exist, but are loosely held: a big employer would be expected to distribute information, set up an intranet site, produce leaflets that help visitors to arrive by public transport, email staff regularly with the information Travelwise provides and work with Travel West Midlands and Centro to hold information, awareness and sales sessions. If an organisation came on board and did not meet these expectations, officers would use informal contacts to deliver change, rather than go back to the planning process to enforce. In some cases an organisation that is not carrying out some agreed actions will turn out to be doing others that are as valuable in delivering outcomes.
- 7A.33 Birmingham's approach, and its reluctance to use the 'stick' of the section 106 agreement or sanctions, is linked to regeneration objectives: "*We don't want to make it too hard, but we want to make sure that when they do come there is a decent transport system.*"

#### 5. Officer views on achievements, barriers and learning

##### **Key achievements**

- 7A.34 Birmingham City Council won a National Transport Award in 2004 for travel planning work with Mitchells and Butlers, a retail company which affiliated to Company Travelwise before relocating to Birmingham City Centre. Initially a travel survey determined that 95% of staff drove to three regional centres and that staff were generally intent on continuing to use the car after the move. A large number of parking spaces were consequently reserved in an NCP car park, 15 minutes away, to supplement 200 spaces at the development itself. A parking management policy was issued, whereby staff with access to the 200 spaces would have to rotate with NCP users. Company car users were offered a 50% public transport discount if they switched from their company cars. Public transport was vigorously promoted with information days and a bus laid on by Travel West Midlands to visit the new premises. At the time of the move, car driving had dropped from 95% to 85% and six months later it had dropped to 83%.
- 7A.35 Achieving the target of 30% of employees in Birmingham covered by a travel plan is also considered a key achievement. There is a close relationship with the NHS Trust group of employers and work with the NHS on hospital travel planning has been particularly productive.

##### **Key barriers**

- 7A.36 Key barriers include: a limited amount of second round monitoring taking place, and there are limited resources to achieve more; there are remaining gaps in the public transport system; and there are concerns that restricting parking could be a problem for staff retention.

**Key recommendations for future guidance**

7A.37 Officers commented that whilst guidance can be helpful they would prefer it not to be too prescriptive. They are of the view that local authorities are, on the whole, best placed to make the detailed balanced decisions that effect their own areas. Officers would welcome guidance that gave a clear steer on the number of people who should be allocated to travel planning work – they currently have 2.5 posts covering 250 businesses. Ideally officers would like to have someone dedicated to monitoring of travel plans and keeping track of planning applications together with three or four members of staff dealing with companies.

**Examples of innovative practice**

7A.38 The authority has just started to offer a travel planning service for community centres such as places of worship. It has recently procured a car club through a section 106 agreement.

**6. Senior officer perspective**

7A.39 The Head of Transport Strategy is involved in determining how travel planning feeds into the transport strategy, how much staffing is put into it and the future direction of the programme. The Council recognises the increasing role for soft factor measures as highway capacity runs out: The authority has spent a lot of money on cycling, walking and bus improvements but it has not made much impact as yet, and they now need to persuade people to use these modes. Workplace travel planning is one means of doing this and is considered to have been reasonably successful. However, there was some scepticism about the effectiveness of travel plans, many of which do not going beyond 'lip service'.

7A.40 In terms of wider traffic trends: the city has seen a slight drop in commuter traffic in the last 10 years:

- Between 1995 and 2005 inbound traffic in the morning peak fell from 62,000 to 45,000
- In the same period rail increased from 13,000 to 20,000 and Park and Ride now forms about 50% of rail journeys into the city centre
- The number of cars parked in the city centre at midday has declined from 50,000 to 40,000 in the same period

7A.41 Travelwise may have contributed to this change but the main reason for the cut in traffic has been changes in the location of employment, reducing the level of commuting into the city centre. The service sector is now more concentrated in the core of the city and manufacturing areas have been converted to residential. Census figures show that between 1991 and 2001, the mode share for travel to work by car increased from 59% to 61%. Commuting by bus and on foot has fallen, whilst rail commuting and working from home has risen.

**Travel to work by mode of transport in Birmingham**

	Car	Bus	On foot	Rail	At home	Motorcycle	Bicycle	Other
<b>2001</b>	61	18	7	6	6	1	1	0
<b>1991</b>	59	22	8	4	2	1	1	3
<b>1981</b>	50	30	10	4	2	2	1	1

Source: 2001, 1991 and 1981 census data

- 7A.42 Identifying resources for travel planning has become an increasing problem as the programme extends to more companies and there is pressure to cut revenue budgets. Members are suggesting that funding for the programme should be secured from developers, but colleagues in planning are reluctant to do this.
- 7A.43 The Head of Transport Strategy has not had specific training in travel planning, but has gained experience and understanding of travel planning through involvement in development applications over a long period. Travel planning is seen to be contributing to the corporate objectives of reducing congestion and increasing sustainability, together with policies to encourage visitors, employment and activity in the city. However, there are tensions between these objectives, because demand for parking at new developments is in conflict with the use of parking restraint as a means of reducing traffic generation through travel planning. The authority has previously had problems with restricting parking on a residential development close to the city centre, where an allocation of 1-2 spaces per dwelling resulted in unacceptable levels of fly parking.

## **7. Member perspective**

- 7A.44 No member views were available at the time of the case study.

## **8. Progress of case study travel plan from earlier guidance**

- 7A.45 At the time of the previous guidance Bellview Medical Centre had become an affiliate of Travelwise as a result of a planning condition on redevelopment. The development was relatively small scale with only 20 – 30 staff. Action planned for the centre included a travel survey and provision of public transport information and concessions available through Company Travelwise. Because of the small size of the centre, working with Bellview was not seen as a priority for the travelwise team, and the co-ordinator had no information on what had been implemented, though it was known that there were still some staff sales of travel passes.

## **6. Key points of interest**

- 7A.46 The key points of interest are:
- Economic and development objectives have led to a reluctance to use parking restraint as a means of reducing traffic and congestion, and to plans to liberalise parking, partly influenced by revisions to PPG3.
  - Close working relationships between Centro, Travel West Midlands and the city council have enabled the development of a comprehensive package of support for travel planning, including financial incentives for public transport.
  - Finding revenue funding to support travel planning and monitoring is seen as an increasing problem, but there is a reluctance (on the part of planners particularly) to require the developer to provide the funding that might otherwise bridge this gap.
  - The monitoring data available indicate positive results from the Travelwise programme at individual sites. There has also been a reduction in peak hour inbound traffic in the city, but census data shows an increase in driving on the journey to work which is less encouraging.
  - Lack of consistent monitoring is a weakness of the Travelwise programme. Reluctance to tackle parking through travel planning may also have reduced

the impact of travel plans, but a closer analysis of monitoring data would be needed to assess this.

- Planners are concerned by policies that might limit their flexibility, and are reluctant to impose demands on developers as a result of travel planning, fearing that this would weaken the city's competitive position in attracting new development.

**Interviewees:**

Mike Cooper, Travelwise Coordinator  
 Richard Goulborn, Area Planning Manager – Central Team  
 Chris Haynes, Head of Transportation Strategy

**B - Sheffield City Council**

**1. Overall approach**

***Travel plan experience and effectiveness***

7B.1 In the last six years, the number of travel plans secured as part of a planning approval has grown steadily year on year, from three in 2001 to 48 in 2006, with a total of 129 overall. Some 38 have been implemented to date. The authority has some evidence on the effects of travel plans from ten organisations that have reported monitoring data across two years - see below. A further 23 organisations have year 1 data only.

**Travel plan monitoring data from organisations reporting across two years**

Organisation	Year 1 car use %	Year 2 car use %	Percentage point change
Mawsdley – distribution	43	54	11
12 0 Clock – office	79	84	5
B&Q Queens	56	54	-2
Sheffield County Council	49.2	44.6	-4.6
WH Smith – office	67	61	-6
Telewest – call centre	83	77	-6
TC Harrison – JCB sales and service	96	90	-6
Kingsfield Heath – office	87	80	-7
Dixons/Mastercare – repair service	60	53	-7
Crystal Peaks – shopping centre	54	38	-16

Average modal shift in percentage points: -3.86

Average positive modal shift in percentage points: -6.83

Comparative % changes would obviously be higher e.g. 30% reduction at Crystal Peaks; 11.6% at Dixons/Mastercare; 9% at Sheffield City Council. (However, low survey return at Crystal Peaks.)

***Objectives and commitment***

7B.2 The authority's objectives in seeking travel plans are to minimise vehicle emissions and car travel, and to improve accessibility. Travel plans are seen as

helping to meet corporate objectives of social inclusion, accessibility and sustainability, and to be in line with the aspirations in council's strap-line: *Cleaner, Greener, Safer*.

- 7B.3 Attitudes of senior officers and members to the need for and effectiveness of travel plans attached to development proposals are "fairly positive". The travel plan officer was recently called in to report on travel planning to councillors as part of the council's scrutiny process. The majority of councillors taking part were keen for organisations to have plans and saw benefits in them. The Head of Transport is also very keen on travel planning. Attitudes from the public have been more mixed, but the authority occasionally has requests from organisations for travel plans, for example, where residents' parking is being introduced businesses are sometimes interested.

### **Key partners**

- 7B.4 In securing travel plans, key partners are developers, developers' consultants, the South Yorkshire Public Transport Executive (PTE), public transport operators and, most importantly, the final end user of the site. Where travel plan co-ordinators are appointed, they also become important partners. The authority works closely with the Primary Care Trust (PCT). NICE – the National Institute for Clinical Excellence - is preparing guidance on what PCTs should be doing to promote active travel and travel planning and is using Sheffield PCT as a consultee. There has also been work with the Chamber of Commerce, the Highways Agency and the car club WhizzGo.

## **2. Policy and process for securing travel plans**

### **Supplementary planning guidance and documents**

- 7B.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) – *Guidelines for the Preparation Of Transport Assessments & Travel Plans* – is available on the city council website, and explains the need for travel plans and transport assessments to be submitted as part of planning applications. Initially approved in 2001, this was amended in 2004 to include advice on preparing travel plans. A checklist for travel plans was further updated in 2006. Not all elements of this guidance have been formally consulted on and so some of it is regarded as interim.

- 7B.6 The authority is now in the process of developing a comprehensive new Sustainable Travel Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Currently at pre-consultation phase, this will cover car clubs, developer contributions, travel plans, transport assessments and car parking. Among the issues to be addressed by the new guidance will be the process of getting the occupier to produce the detailed travel plan – there is a feeling that the communication needs to be improved. Ensuring travel plans include contact details is also a priority.

### **Thresholds and requirements**

- 7B.7 The current SPG says transport assessments are required for retail developments with a minimum gross floor area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup>+, offices of 2,500m<sup>2</sup>+, industrial uses of 6,000m<sup>2</sup>+, residential developments of 80units + and other developments with 60+ vehicle movements in any hour. Thresholds are also given for site area in hectares. The council reserves the right to request a TA in other instances.



- 7B.8 Submission of a travel plan is similarly required as part of the supporting documentation for planning applications with a floor area exceeding 2,500m<sup>2</sup> for employment sites (which could involve a number of smaller employers joining together) or a floor area exceeding 1,000m<sup>2</sup> for all other sites. For residential schemes, however, the guidance explains that a formal travel plan is not expected, but the development should promote travel choice. A list of potential measures is included. Otherwise planning applications that meet the requirement of needing a transport assessment will also need a travel plan, and the two are usually submitted together in the same document, with the travel plan forming one chapter of the transport assessment.
- 7B.9 A 'framework travel plan' is recommended for speculative/mixed use development. This details the essential elements and suggests minimum measures to be implemented and other measures that may be suitable, and establishing the roles and responsibilities of those involved, including the developer, management companies and future occupiers. It sets overarching objectives and targets for the site as a whole: and it states how the plan will be monitored, reviewed and improved, as well as offering guidance to future occupiers on what their own detailed company specific measures should include. A two-phase process is advised. In Phase 1 the framework travel plan is prepared to cover all potential land uses, while in Phase 2, prior to occupation of the site, individual occupants are required to submit an organisation-specific travel plan, contributing to the overall objectives and targets already set out.

***Process and responsibilities for securing plans***

- 7B.10 Pre-application discussions are encouraged through the guidance, which recommends a two-stage approach to both the transport assessment and the travel plan. At Stage 1, the scope and assumptions are agreed with council officers, ahead of Stage 2 – the production of the assessment study or travel plan document. For large developments particularly the developer will be advised to talk to the travel plan officer prior to submission.
- 7B.11 Once an application is received that includes a travel plan, all details are sent to highways development control, who will then pass the travel plan back to the travel plan officer for comment. Responses go to the planning officer in development control, copied to highways development control, and passed to the developer. Similarly, school travel plans are referred to the school travel advisers.

***Evaluation of incoming travel plans***

- 7B.12 The local authority's own travel plan checklist is used to evaluate the travel plan, together with the judgement and experience of officers. Officers look particularly for contact details, positive language, a comprehensive range of measures, measures that are site-appropriate and an action plan linking everything together, for example to monitor, implement, promote and monitor again. Existing good practice travel plans are used as a benchmark. The authority does not use the DfT's travel plan evaluation tool. There was limited experience of this tool but officers had found it gave a low score to a travel plan that was considered a good one. The council's own checklist has been useful in providing guidance to developers and their consultants.

### **Targets and monitoring process**

- 7B.13 The South Yorkshire Local Transport Plan 2001 - 2006 included a target that car use for new businesses should be no greater than 60%. In general targets are negotiated rather than prescribed, but the local authority tends to ask developers to refer to this 60% figure. Targets may also be based on best practice achievements of specific sites. The 60% figure is high, given that 42% of houses in Sheffield do not have access to a car. One reason for this choice of target is that it is for South Yorkshire as a whole and so includes more rural sites. In addition, Sheffield has a recent history of backing regeneration in areas that are close to motorways.
- 7B.14 Encouragement for such development around the M1 in South Yorkshire has also come from a 'Memorandum of Understanding' between the Highways Agency and the relevant local planning authorities that applied to development in Objective 1 areas. This allowed regeneration development without contributions or at a reduced level of contribution, on the basis that infrastructure improvements such as M1 widening were coming on line in future. Travel plans were incorporated into the memorandum in that they were expected to play a role in reducing car use at these sites. The memorandum is no longer in force but has fostered new development at relatively car dependent sites.
- 7B.15 The transport assessment must include an assessment of traffic generation expected from the site. The authority's guidance also asks developers to quantify generation of pedestrian, bicycle and public transport trips, considering likely numbers of people arriving by each different mode. The TRICS database is generally used to establish expected traffic generation and can also give multi-modal predictions. TRICS provides two types of data – 85<sup>th</sup> percentile trip rates and average ones. On the basis that a site is going to have a travel plan the authority tends to use the average trip rates. However, 85<sup>th</sup> percentile trip rates are considered appropriate where sites are poorly served by public transport. Trip rates must also relate to proposed car parking levels. The trip generation estimates take account of the site's amenability to walking, cycling and public transport, including those facilities proposed to improve this, all of which are included in the TA.
- 7B.16 Whilst TRICS makes it possible to refine the specification of the site – e.g. to give details of public transport access or parking levels – fewer sites can be identified to provide comparable information. In a few years time, when the data base includes more sites with multi-modal trip generation figures, it will be possible to get a detailed prediction of what the theoretical split will be from day one, but this is more difficult at present.
- 7B.17 The authority has not investigated the use of the TRICS/ACT standard for assessing travel plan impacts, but considers that it would be helpful to have wider adoption of standard methodology. At present organisations implementing travel plans are requested to carry out surveys annually or biannually. However, across South Yorkshire the four authorities and the Passenger Transport Executive are working together to develop their own standard monitoring procedure and draft standard monitoring guidance notes and schedules have been produced (Sheffield City Council, 2007). At the end of each year organisations will be required to produce a portfolio of evidence. This will include:

- Evidence of data collection and feedback. A full staff travel survey is to be carried out at occupation (33% or six months, whichever occurs first) and repeated after one year and then every two years. A snapshot survey of site users is required at years 2 and 4. In addition, each year, the organisation is required to carry out snapshot surveys of car parking, cycle parking and car sharers (registered and matched), and to collect information on the cost of business mileage, number of loans and public transport tickets issued.
- Evidence of promotion e.g. literature and details of events
- Evidence of implementation – e.g. photos showing measures
- An action plan for the future, including responsibilities, contact details and an annual review process.

7B.18 The monitoring guidance includes a six-question staff travel survey which covers postcode, distance from work, time of commuter journey, time of shift, mode of travel and travel used when the first choice is not available. The organisational survey collects information about staff numbers, travel in the course of work, numbers of visitors, and travel-related policies, for example, on business travel, car park management and home-working, together with a series of site audit questions, including number of car parking spaces and accessibility by sustainable transport.

#### ***Funding for monitoring***

7B.19 Funding for monitoring is not currently secured from the developer through the planning process. However, for residential travel plans the council is offering a monitoring service at a cost per unit. In future the authority will require that organisations carrying out monitoring must get their monitoring process validated either by an independent consultant or by the council themselves, who will charge for this, subject to the type and size of development. One option under consideration is a standard minimum charge plus an additional cost per parking space up to a maximum amount. The organisation will not be meeting its planning condition without this type of validation, which is required on an annual basis for five years. A monitoring validation checklist is included in the monitoring guidance.

#### ***Use of conditions, agreements, contributions and sanctions***

7B.20 The authority's current standard condition is as follows:

*Before any of the development is occupied, a travel plan to reduce dependency on the private car, which shall include clear and unambiguous objectives and modal split targets, together with a timebound programme of implementation, monitoring and regular review and improvement; and be based on the particulars contained within the approved framework produced in support of this application, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter operated.*

7B.21 A new updated condition has still to be agreed and checked if lawful, but if adopted will include reference to the monitoring framework, as follows:

*Prior to the occupation of any part of the development, a detailed Travel Plan, designed to reduce the need for, and impact of, motor vehicles including fleet operations, increase site accessibility and to facilitate and encourage alternative travel modes, shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where there has been a previously approved Framework*

*Travel Plan for the proposed development, the detailed Travel Plan shall be developed in accordance with it. The Travel Plan shall include:*

- *Clear and unambiguous objectives and modal split targets;*
- *An implementation programme;*
- *Arrangements, in accordance with the agreed 'Monitoring Framework', to evaluate, review and refine the Travel Plan to achieve the approved objectives and modal split targets;*
- *Arrangements to submit an impartially validated progress report and portfolio of evidence to the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the agreed 'Monitoring Framework'.*

7B.22 Organisations generally have to produce a detailed travel plan prior to occupation. Where the set of measures is agreed through the plan and nothing is done, the organisation will be told to start again from year 1, and in the past all organisations have been happy to do this. The ultimate sanction is that failure to comply would be pursued as a breach of condition. Where an organisation travel plan is implemented but fails to meet targets there is no enforcement at present, though there is a view that there should be.

7B.23 In securing travel plans, the authority has generally favoured conditions rather than legal agreements on the grounds of speed and simplicity. However, travel plans are expected to become more robust over time, and it is thought that this may lead to the need for legal agreements, for example, to give scope for penalties, to secure monitoring arrangements and elements requiring pump priming contributions such as a car club.

7B.24 It should be noted that development control *do* sometimes use section 106/section 278 agreements to require transport related improvements e.g. public transport contributions or cycling infrastructure, but this is done independently of the travel plan and travel plan officers are not party to discussions.

7B.25 There is also interest in the use of 'Grampian Conditions' to obtain contributions at a later point in time i.e. a condition that says the development should not be allowed to happen until a legal agreement has been entered into at a subsequent date. This might include, for example, an agreement with an approved car club operator. (There is currently an advice note on the Planning Officers' Society website which has some relevance but there are considerable legal issues to be aware of)

7B.26 However, a section 106 agreement is being drawn up in relation to a travel plan for 50,000 sq m office development which will locate 3-4,000 jobs, at the site of a former airport, close to the motorway six miles from Sheffield. Officers saw the site as an example of an unsustainable location, but it has been agreed as it is regarded as a major priority for jobs and regeneration. The Highways Agency was a consultee and has been actively involved in strengthening the travel plan for the site. Having initially refused the development HA subsequently withdrew its refusal in the light of the travel plan, which includes a £1.5m contribution to public transport spend over three years, a parking management strategy and a travel co-ordinator. It also includes a sanction that once 60% of the site is built out the developer will not be allowed to go beyond this unless the authority is

absolutely satisfied that the required targets have been met. The targets themselves are still to be agreed.

- 7B.27 There is no standard method used to calculate contributions, though the authority would like to see contributions to a sustainable transport pot with figures for each mode based on accessibility criteria. To this end officers are working with the PTE to develop a contribution matrix that would be based on location, accessibility, car generation/trip generation and land use, and this will be part of the new sustainable transport SPD. The belief is that this would avoid the problem of loading the whole cost of contributions onto the first developer at a new site.

***Involvement of members, stakeholders and transport operators***

- 7B.28 Members are not involved in detailed negotiations on travel plans, although they are on area boards making decisions on planning applications. If residents are concerned about the traffic impact of a development, councillors may refer them to the travel plan officer. To negotiate with transport operators the authority works mostly through the PTE but also directly with operators such as First and Stagecoach who have been 'quite keen' to help with travel plan initiatives and incentives. For example, The Crucible Theatre in Sheffield has just received planning permission for a refurbishment and expansion, with a condition to produce a travel plan, and there have been discussions about a public transport ticket as part of the theatre ticket. Both operators appear keen to support this. The PTE offers a variety of services that are relevant to travel planning – such as personalised journey planning - which developers can use.

**3. Implementation**

- 7B.29 Once planning permission is granted, the travel plan officer takes responsibility for ensuring implementation. In the last 18 months this has involved being in touch with about 50 – 60 organisations where travel plans had earlier been secured through the planning process, and they have now heard back from all but one. However, there was a 2.5 year gap in the absence of an appropriate officer during which there was little follow-up taking place. A major problem has been lack of contact details. Organisations are asked about their progress and provided with information about new initiatives. The travel plan officer's role is to give help and direction.
- 7B.30 For the last six – seven years, the authority has operated a database of travel plans which stores contacts, planning application details, conditions, audit and survey data, correspondence and information about the site. Sheffield has not used iTRACE software but would be interested in it. Officers also see scope for linking monitoring of progress on travel plans with the Local Transport Plan performance monitoring system, which tracks capital spend and outcomes of schemes. They would particularly value a system that is user-friendly and makes it possible to amalgamate data over a wider area. They are less enthusiastic about the use of a standard survey, as in iTRACE, since they have found organisations like to be able to customise surveys for their own sites.
- 7B.31 Key statistics have been reported to members through the council's scrutiny process, and this will be repeated in future. The new monitoring framework is one means of ensuring that the data is provided, alongside a process of 'chivvying'.

#### **4. Enforcement**

7B.32 The authority is generally keener on “carrots than sticks”. About a dozen organisations have been threatened with enforcement, which could have resulted in a breach of condition notice, followed by action in magistrate’s court and a possible fine. So far this has not proved necessary. Employers appear to be responding well to the “chivvyng approach” – most have come back to ask what they need to do. The availability of city-wide support schemes for travel plans, such as a car share database, a car club, matched funding for cycle facilities and better information on the Internet, are all seen as useful ways of engaging organisations.

7B.33 In the past, there has been considerable pressure not to have onerous requirements. Now there is more discussion within the authority around the use of bonded payments and penalties. Five years ago this would not have been considered. The climate change agenda has been important in bringing about this attitude change. Also key is the realisation that congestion can be a problem and can threaten economic development, for example, at certain pinch points on the M1.

7B.34 As can be seen from the results above, two of the organisations that have submitted two years worth of monitoring data have found an increase in car use. For both, however, there have been exacerbating factors. Mawsdley, a distribution company, was originally based at the railway station and moved out to a newly developed industrial park. Consequently its results reflected its move to an inaccessible location, but the move itself could not have been addressed through the planning process, since Mawsdley is an occupier rather than a developer. The 12 0 Clock office has seen a shift from public transport to car sharing following problems with public transport (an issue that could arguably be addressed by the travel plan). As mentioned earlier, a sanction has been included in the case of a section 106 agreement for new office development.

#### **5. Officer views on achievements, barriers and learning**

##### ***Key achievements***

7B.35 This is seen as the success in engaging companies and working across South Yorkshire to bring planning policies into line.

##### ***Key barrier***

7B.36 A key barrier is the organisation’s internal resource issues, which can result in travel plans not meeting aspirations: also travel plans with dedicated staff time have better success.

##### ***Key learning points***

7B.37 A better end result is felt to be achieved if the person writing the travel plan talks direct to the travel plan officer, even where travel plan guidance is followed. Consultant-written travel plans are often very poor.

##### ***Key recommendations for future guidance***

7B.38 The authority would like assurance about the legality of using developer contributions to employ staff or carry out monitoring. They would also like more

on sanctions and model section 106 agreements. Guidance suggesting levels of contribution would be useful.

## **6. Senior officer perspective**

7B.39 The role of senior officers is to ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place. They see huge tension between pressure for development and issues of highway capacity and air quality, and recognise that there are instances where the travel plan has been a 'fig leaf' since it is coupled with high levels of car parking. This conflict is a key barrier and it is hoped that growing awareness of climate change will make it possible to be more robust in future. There have been some developments that have been resisted – e.g. a sports retailer that wanted to locate by a motorway junction and was persuaded to move into a site at the edge of the city centre.

7B.40 Lack of authority resources for travel planning is a key barrier. It has sometimes been overcome through specific funding streams – e.g. DEFRA funding made available for travel plan development within an Air Quality Management Area; and use of Planning Delivery Grant. Lack of revenue as opposed to capital funding is also a barrier, and makes it more difficult to take forward an agenda on education and awareness-raising. Senior officers' own awareness about travel plans has been raised through internal presentations. Appropriate officers attend contact groups, such as the development control managers' group, which have enabled them to keep up to date with best practice.

## **7. Member perspective**

7B.41 The cabinet member for transport works closely with his cabinet counterparts for economic regeneration and for the environment to agree priorities on travel planning. Sheffield now has 'an explosion of development', which is also driving a rapid increase in car ownership, and is impacting on neighbourhoods that have not previously had to withstand high volumes of cars. Travel plans are seen as a way of addressing worsening congestion, meeting the council's commitment to becoming 'cleaner, greener, safer', and reducing the city's carbon footprint.

7B.42 Councillors have received training on the use of travel planning as a demand management tool through briefings from officers and seminars run by the Passenger Transport Executive. There have been visits to Merton and Greenwich to explore strategies for the delivery of a low emissions zone in Sheffield. Training has been helpful and has made it easier to explain travel planning to residents.

7B.43 An example of a successful travel plan initiative is HUMUS – an acronym for Hospitals, Universities, Museums and Us. This travel plan is helping to address traffic problems in an area on the edge of the city, where 'little suburbia' is nestled between major traffic generators such as hospitals and universities. Buses, including a student bus, bus priority measures, park and ride, and cycle lanes, have been part of the solution, which are considered to have been successful. This travel plan has been implemented on a voluntary basis but with some site-specific requirements through planning consents for individual sites.

7B.44 Members consider the biggest barrier to travel planning is funding, e.g. for monitoring and enforcement. The pace of growth around the city represents a major challenge and better monitoring and enforcement are critical to future success.

## **8. Progress of case study travel plan from earlier guidance**

7B.55 In 2000/1 a travel plan was secured for a Dixons call centre with 1,300 employees, through a planning condition linked to a temporary expansion (five years) in car parking of 53 spaces. (NB – this is not the Dixons/Mastercare service included in monitoring results given earlier.) An action plan in 2001 showed plans for a variety of initiatives with the following measures implemented:

- A travel issues committee
- A local recruitment strategy
- Personalised journey plans provided for staff in association with the PTE
- A discounted travel pass
- An interest-free loan for annual travel tickets

7B.56 A 2003 review records action on further measures:

- Public transport information at reception, on company intranet and for visitors
- Cycle facilities and the workplace
- Access to a car sharing database and a preferential rate agreed for local taxis

7B.57 In 2005, the travel plan officer contacted the call centre to check on progress, and in May 2006, following discussion with development control, it was agreed that the call centre could keep its temporary car parking for the present, subject to the organisation carrying out a follow-up travel survey and revising the action plan. The intention remains that car parking should be removed over time. Since this contact, however, communication appears to have foundered, and there is no monitoring data available. The case study emphasises the importance of continuity of contact.

## **9. Key points of interest**

7B.58 The authority's approach to securing travel plans on new development has become more robust over time through:

- more comprehensive monitoring requirements – including a 'portfolio of evidence' and validation process – backed up by supporting guidance
- establishment of a database to manage and review the process
- systematic efforts to contact organisations and check on progress

7B.59 The conflict between priorities for economic development and traffic generation has led to the choice of some unsustainable locations for new development and adoption of 'fig leaf' travel plans, with relatively low aspirations for cutting car dependency, and targets to match. This conflict is becoming less acute as a result of growing congestion, increasing awareness of climate change and the better ability of neighbouring authorities to pursue similar policies.

7B.60 For the most part, the authority has continued to secure travel plans through conditions in preference to section 106 agreements, on grounds of time pressure,



although agreements are still used for some transport measures independently of the travel plan. However, the council is increasingly identifying the need for mechanisms to secure financial contributions and to provide sanctions/penalties for non-compliance, and this may lead to the use of more planning agreements in future – possibly with the use of Grampian conditions to overcome issues of speed (see above caveat). Transport planners have been effective in their efforts to raise awareness of travel planning amongst colleagues and members, through internal presentations etc.

**Interviewees:**

Paul Sullivan, Travel Plan Officer, Transport Planning

Howard Baxter, Development Control

Ian Wheeldon, Highways Development Control

Rachel Harvey, Principal Transport Planner and Team Leader of Travel Plan Officers,

Graham Withers, Head of Development Control

Councillor Terry Fox, Cabinet member for transport

## C - Stoke-on-Trent City Council

### 1. Background and overall approach

- 7C.1 Stoke-on-Trent City Council (Stoke) is a unitary authority and was a case study for the 2001/2 travel plan guidance. Its social and economic position is important in the context of its current approach to travel plans. It is an authority facing a massive challenge in terms of regenerating a declining industrial area, and consequently places regeneration as its highest priority, a sentiment strongly backed by the Government Office/DfT/CLG. The key issue for the council is how to achieve regeneration and a quality environment in tandem with a sustainable travel system. *“The need for regeneration takes priority over all else; it is at the top of the priority pile. Consequently, it’s a trade off between what we want, and what a developer can reasonably be expected to support. We don’t want to be asking for things that put developers off investing in the area.”*
- 7C.2 Car ownership is low in the city (2001 Census) in comparison to other areas, and there is a need to manage the personal desire to own a car (often for the first time) with other objectives. Good public transport infrastructure is essential to provide an alternative to private car use within the city. There is a high level of inward commuting from surrounding areas, particularly where new jobs are created. Postcode plots indicate a very wide area base for inward commuting, from areas within and beyond the Potteries conurbation, where public transport is not an option due to lack of infrastructure or provision. In these instances, car sharing and home working become priorities rather than public transport use. The City is 350/354 in the Sport England league table of participation in physical activity.
- 7C.3 Stoke is an authority in a time of change. It received a poor CPA rating, (although overall the Environment Block did well), and in part this is prompting a new initiative ‘*Taking Planning Forward*’ based on a new service improvement plan to improve the delivery of planning as a function and address poor public perceptions of the service. It may also have implications for the ways in which

travel plans are sought, secured, and followed through. The overall approach to travel plans, whether voluntary or secured through the planning system, is a 'hearts and minds' approach - to encourage businesses to take travel plans onboard as part of their business culture. The council is also keen to provide assistance over time to help achieve long-term changes in travel behaviour.

### **Travel plan experience and effectiveness**

- 7C.4 Travel plans are not yet a formal policy requirement in Stoke due in part to the change to the LDF system, the lack of up-to-date policies, and the need to currently operate under old plans – the 2001 City Local Plan (Policies TP1 and TP12) and the 1996 Joint Staffordshire/Stoke-on-Trent Structure Plan. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy is under review and the North Staffordshire Core Spatial Strategy (being prepared jointly between Stoke and Newcastle-Under-Lyme) is at Preferred Options stage and was not available to provide the strategic context. Officers believe it will be at least a year until they will have a new policy framework under the LDF and a more effective base from which to work – until this is in place their ability to have robust travel plans is likely to be restricted.
- 7C.5 Nevertheless, officers believe their approach is becoming increasingly effective. Despite the absence of a robust policy base, they are trying to seek new travel plans as part of development proposals, and are doing a lot of work with existing organisations to promote voluntary travel plans. The North Staffordshire LTP (March 2006) is used as an interim policy base, linking the need for travel plans to the desire to achieve LTP targets, particularly around improving accessibility by non-car modes (Ch 6), tackling congestion (Ch 7) and improving air quality (Ch 8).
- 7C.6 Sixty-two workplaces within the city area currently have travel plans in place (8 voluntary, 13 through the grant scheme, and 41 through the planning process) which cover 17% of the working population. Of these, 23 are for businesses with less than 100 employees, and 39 are for those with over 100 employees. The 2006 LTP1 Delivery Report indicates that 30% of the workforce in North Staffs are now in organisations with agreed travel plans.
- 7C.7 However, officers think they could achieve more: *“It’s a time issue, waiting for the formalisation of the upper level policies, a mixed bag, but better than it was a few years ago. It’s slow in some areas where development is just not happening yet, we’re not achieving the levels of modal shift we’d like to see at present, and it still needs to bed in – and needs more monitoring.”*
- 7C.8 The council has had its own workplace travel plan in place since 2000, managed by a cross-departmental working group. This includes two business pool vehicles, pool bikes, showering facilities, cycle loan and allowance scheme, discounted annual bus passes and priority parking for car sharers. It has a dedicated officer for school travel plans, and is a keen member of TravelWise. The travel plan co-ordinator is a member of the West Midlands Officer Sub Group and attends regional meetings. Stoke is a small authority and is keen to work in partnership with other authorities and agencies, particularly on cross-boundary issues.

### **Objectives and commitment**

- 7C.9 Objectives for requiring travel plans through the planning system derive from the broad policies of the Structure Plan (1996-2011) and the 2001 City Local Plan. Both pre-date the concept of travel plans so provide little detail on which to hang requests. PPG13, the LTP1 2006 and the Council's Corporate Priorities for 'Safe and Healthy Communities' are used as interim policy objectives until such time as the Core Strategy is in place, which will set out clear objectives on sustainable transport.
- 7C.10 Senior officer commitment to the need for sustainable travel and the positive role of travel plans is apparent, but they also recognise the need to balance sometimes-conflicting priorities. Member commitment is generally positive, but this is complicated by the system of an elected Mayor and Council Manager. A total of 93% of planning decisions are delegated, only key policy documents go to full Council, there is no Cabinet, Scrutiny Committees have very defined roles, and the Mayor's Office is the key point for all policy issues. Officers consider that members could benefit from more training in travel plan issues.
- 7C.11 The public, as stakeholders, have a limited input to travel plans, although the council's travel plan grant system occasionally triggers requests for things to be included. The most common form of involvement is in objecting to a proposed development. Lack of information and education is recognised as a barrier restricting inward commuters from adopting more sustainable travel modes.

### **Key partners**

- 7C.12 The key partners in Stoke are seen as being developers, businesses and transport operators. The council is keen to provide a service to all, and can facilitate and enable discussions on travel plan issues such as - liaising with transport operators on behalf of a developer, or seeking route improvements or information provision for example. There are currently no car clubs in the area but officers hope they may come eventually through awareness raising and the wider climate change debate.
- 7C.13 Stoke is proactive in seeking voluntary travel plans and works closely with local businesses on all types of travel plans, through the workplace co-ordinator. Leaflets are used to promote that free help is available to companies to develop their own travel plans, including:
- a Travel Plan Resource Pack
  - site visits
  - a free 5 day consultation
  - GIS mapping service
  - support and assistance in drawing up a plan (including guidance on content, structure, management, measures, initiatives, and targets)
  - preparation of site assessments and surveys
  - annual survey/questionnaire analysis (for a small fee)
- 7C.14 They also offer incentives (initially funded through SRB and now mainstreamed through the LTP) in the form of grants of up to £5,000 if a company develops their own travel plan. Grants are usually targeted at measures to promote cycling and walking, such as showers and changing facilities, cycle storage, pool bikes, improved lighting, pedestrian crossings and improved cycle/walking routes.

- 7C.15 Other partners include the county council and the healthcare provider. The North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust has adopted a full travel plan for the main hospital site in Stoke following redevelopment. As a cross boundary project, Staffs county council and adjoining local authorities secured a travel plan through a tripartite section 106 agreement, led by the county council.
- 7C.16 Occasionally the Highways Agency may be a partner in securing and delivering travel plans, as is likely to happen at the major 40-50ha mixed-use redevelopment site at the Chatterley Valley on the edge of the city. This project is being strongly championed by the RDA/Advantage West Midlands, (job creation appears to be a higher priority than travel issues). The Highways Agency are involved because they see travel plan measures as being capable of offsetting the £30 million that would otherwise be necessary (according to the transport assessment) for highways infrastructure improvements to allow the site to be fully developed.
- 7C.17 Working jointly with Stoke and Staffs CC, a travel plan package is being developed for this area that will include robust targets, the nomination of a full-time travel plan co-ordinator on site, and a travel plan steering group to be established to monitor and review the travel plan. Stoke and Staffs CC are co-signatories to a section 106 agreement, signed in February 2007, with the Highways Agency entering a parallel (section 278) agreement with the local highways authorities, as they cannot legally be party to the section 106.
- 7C.18 In other instances, the Highways Agency can, it was believed, appear inconsistent sometimes in their approach to travel plans and to sites that are further from the trunk road network. Comments are always sought on applications, particularly for employment uses, on applications on or near trunk roads, but there are sometimes problems and delays in getting responses. Stoke recognises that the Highways Agency is increasingly keen to see travel plans where they can be used to reduce traffic on (their) trunk roads, but consider they could be more proactive and work more closely with the local highways authorities to secure wider benefits, perhaps through the West Midlands Regional Transport Group.
- 7C.19 The council is a member of the employer-led 'Staffordshire Share-A-Lift' web-based car share scheme, which has 1000 registered users and includes the city and county councils, the University, the NHS and large employers. This scheme is promoted widely by the council to local organisations and employers and includes a guaranteed lift home.

## **2. Policy and process for securing travel plans**

- 7C.20 The policies for securing travel plans derive from the broad policies of the Structure Plan (1996-2011) and the 2001 City Local Plan, but there are currently no specific policies on travel plans. Officers hope that the joint North Staffs Core Strategy will provide a stronger policy base in the future.

### ***Supplementary planning guidance and documents***

- 7C.21 There is no supplementary planning guidance on travel plans at present, but officers envisage that under the LDF system there will be an SPD on

infrastructure to provide a more robust context. In the meantime, the broad policies of the Structure Plan are used.

### ***Thresholds and requirements***

7C.22 There are indirect links between the transport assessment and the travel plan. PPG13 thresholds are used as a guide for seeking travel plans, but applications are viewed on a case-by-case basis and developers are asked to prove the case rather than follow a prescriptive procedure on transport impact.

### ***Process and responsibilities for securing plans***

7C.23 Stoke's philosophy is to encourage developers and businesses to engage with travel plans. Free pre-application advice is widely available at a variety of levels, from small applications through to a development team approach on major development sites. This approach is used to seek and secure travel plans in the absence of a clear policy requiring them.

7C.24 Responsibilities for securing travel plans lie initially with the planning development control team, working closely with the travel plan co-ordinator and the highways development control team who sit alongside them. These officers are in the same department and building, which is seen as advantageous in developing a close and seamless working relationship. The travel plan co-ordinator is included in pre-application advice meetings and uses the weekly application list to check that travel plans are being requested or submitted following earlier advice.

### ***Evaluation of incoming travel plans***

7C.25 Travel plan robustness on submission is assessed in Stoke using the DfT Work Place Travel Plan Evaluation Tool as a guide, but it was not seen as being appropriate in the area to use the scoring element. Instead, officers use their own experience and local knowledge to interpret the plans, looking for ambition, realism, commitment for the duration of the plan, an understanding of the need to provide an annual snapshot report with a full survey and update after three years. Internal guidance notes are used and include a very detailed School Travel Plan Evidence Checklist for school plans.

### ***Targets and monitoring process***

7C.26 Travel plan targets in Stoke focus on a main target of achieving an average 10% reduction in Single Vehicle Occupancy (SOV) trips over three years, backed up by specific actions as appropriate to achieve a shift to other transport modes to secure this reduction. Within the city, these are usually measures to promote greater public transport use, walking, and cycling. In the wider area, and in the absence of an effective public transport system, they are likely to be around promoting car-sharing and home-working. There is to be a review of parking provision and levels on all sites as new policies are progressed, but officers do not think they have the policy base (or member support) to insist on more rigorous parking restraint now.

7C.27 TRICS is sometimes used for trip generation modelling, and is used by Staffs CC for major or cross-boundary developments. Stoke uses the council's own transport modelling system (which covers the entire road network in North Staffs) to assess the impact of major developments together with TRICS.

- 7C.28 Monitoring requirements are covered in principle through the condition on the planning application, and amplified in correspondence on the travel plan when submitted, assessed and agreed. An initial survey must be undertaken once the development is occupied, and then 12 months are allowed to get the plan up and running. An annual report is to be submitted, and after three years, an updated plan may be requested. The council provides advice and assistance to the developer/occupier throughout the process including help with survey analysis.
- 7C.29 An Access database is used to track progress on travel plans and to flag up milestones for action. There are no restrictions on the kind of organisation that can carry out monitoring, nor any requirement that the monitoring should be independent. The council's Travel Plan Resource Pack sets out guidelines and sample questionnaires, plus a suggested format for the snapshot survey and annual report. This is not really prescriptive about key indicators and data collection – the onus is on the developer/occupier to demonstrate how the targets are being met, rather than to supply a pre-determined return.

**Funding for monitoring**

- 7C.30 Funding for monitoring is not sought from developers. In many cases, Stoke will assist businesses in monitoring i.e. through analysing annual survey returns, and either meeting the costs themselves or charging a small administration fee.

**Use of conditions, agreements, contributions and sanctions**

- 7C.31 Stoke prefers to use conditions rather than section 106 agreements to secure travel plans, although they are reconsidering their approach to the wider use of section 106 as part of the current planning service review. This includes a 'Task and Finish Group' review of the use of section 106 and possible contributions.
- 7C.32 Reasons given for not using planning agreements include inappropriateness, lack of resources and experience of the process, and potential time delays. Instead, Stoke favours the development brief/development team approach whereby they can balance their aspirations for sustainable travel with the wider regeneration objectives and requirements. However, Staffs County Council exclusively uses section 106 agreements and Stoke has been (or is likely to be) a co-signatory on agreements covering cross-boundary developments such as that under consideration for a large mixed use employment scheme at Chatterley Valley.
- 7C.33 Stoke has used a framework approach on major development sites where individual areas may be developed in differing timeframes, and/or when end users are not known. An example is given for development of one part of the former Michelin site. As follows:

**Typical Condition** (for subsequent development on a site covered by a framework travel plan, and derived from an earlier PINS appeal decision letter on a different site)

**Use: Storage and Distribution Unit with offices, Zone A Plot 2**

*Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, a detailed Travel Plan that sets out how the operator of the unit will reduce reliance on the private motor car shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The detailed Travel Plan shall reflect the principles as set out in the overall Travel Plan for the former Michelin site (dated November 2006) and shall deal with the following key issues:*

- a) *Appointment of a travel plan co-ordinator and notification in writing to the Local Planning Authority of the name of the holder of that post;*
- b) *Measures to promote and facilitate public transport use;*
- c) *Timetables and fare information to be updated regularly;*
- d) *Measures to promote walking and cycling, including the provision of changing and showering facilities;*
- e) *Promotion of car sharing and practices and on site facilities that reduce the need for travel;*
- f) *Monitoring and review mechanisms.*

*Reason – to encourage travel by sustainable modes of transport.*

7C.34 Stoke will accept draft or interim travel plans but **not** to discharge conditions. Where an interim travel plan is submitted, the key focus will be on the process and commitment of the organisation rather than on the detailed targets. A full travel plan is then required when staff are in place.

7C.35 The council does not currently seek any contributions in respect of travel plans or for the implementation of any measures contained within them. Similarly, it does not include any sanctions for under-performance such as failure to deliver measures or targets.

### ***Involvement of members, stakeholders and transport operators***

7C.36 Council members are primarily involved in the travel plans process through their role on the planning committee. Although there is a high level of delegation, major sites are the subject of detailed reports to committee that will include travel plan requirements. Members generally go with officer recommendations and can indicate what should be included (or excluded) to achieve sustainable travel. Members have not received specific training on travel plans, but may do so in the future when the policy base is strengthened and under a review of member training being considered as part of the planning service review.

7C.37 The public and stakeholders are most likely to be involved in the travel plans process through consultation on planning applications. Often this will be in the form of raising objections when development is in residential areas, or where issues of road safety arise.

7C.38 Stoke considers it now has fairly healthy relationships with the transport operators in the area, and certainly better than in recent years when, in 2003, problems around loss of licenses tended to cloud relations. There has been a combined 'quit the car' advertising campaign recently, and evidence of a more responsive approach in respect of complaints and requests for service improvements.

## **3. Implementation**

7C.39 Following the grant of planning permission, responsibility for ensuring implementation of a travel plan required through a condition primarily lies with the travel plan co-ordinator, working in conjunction with the development control case officer. There are issues around general compliance with conditions and enforcement based on lack of resources and relative priorities, which are being reconsidered as part of the wider 'Taking Planning Forward' service review.

- 7C.40 The travel plan co-ordinator used an in-house access database to keep track of progress on travel plans. This covers all stages of a travel plan, from initial enquiries, grant applications, voluntary enquiries and those coming through the planning system. It incorporates a facility to document calls, visits, meetings and correspondence, and can generate a variety of reports on status, numbers of plans and employees, geographical spread and source of travel plan. This is thought to work well and there are no proposals to move to another system. Stoke is not familiar with iTRACE and is not considering using it in the future.
- 7C.41 Reporting processes are in place to update members and senior officers on progress on travel plans, although detailed reporting to members is generally only by exception – if a condition or target is not being met, for example. The council's performance management process includes a target on travel plans and numbers introduced as a key performance indicator – previous target quoted as *“To introduce 35 Travel Plans in organisations with 100+ employees by 2005.”* A quarterly report is produced which is fed into the web-based ‘covalent’ system and used for best value statistics and the Annual Corporate Plan Outturn Report. Travel plan data (i.e. statistics on increases in bus usage) is also used to complete the scorecard for LTP quarterly returns with the county council.
- 7C.42 Assessing the effectiveness of a travel plan in relation to the implementation of the development starts from day one of occupation. An initial survey of travel patterns is undertaken, followed by an annual snapshot survey and a three-year review and update report to show change. In line with the philosophy of supporting organisations in travel plans, the council will often work with an organisation to help in preparing good monitoring data, and may undertake some aspects themselves.

#### 4. Enforcement

- 7C.43 Stoke does not currently take enforcement action in respect of failure to comply with conditions around travel plans. The standard approach if action is overdue is to send a letter from the transport planning manager to the applicant or occupant, asking that outstanding issues be addressed within a defined timescale. This letter includes a template for a model annual report and an offer of help from the travel plan co-ordinator if the organisation is having difficulty compiling an annual report or in revising an existing travel plan.
- 7C.44 Officers agree that this is not an ideal approach to securing effective travel plans, as there have been problems with a lack of implementation of elements of travel plans, or not meeting conditions, especially older plans and on smaller sites. In one instance, there has been a failure to deliver outcomes in terms of the target modal shift, despite implementing all measures and a lot of effort by the occupier. Enforcement procedures are being reviewed as part of the planning service review, and officers are hopeful that more resources may be available to seek compliance with conditions in the future.
- 7C.45 Stoke does not apply penalties or sanctions for failure to deliver measures or outcomes, but tries to encourage and motivate occupants instead. Officers expressed doubts around how performance bonds would work in practice (or in court...) and considered this was one area the new government guidance could cover, particularly in relation to the use of section 106 and penalties.



## 5. Officer views on achievements, barriers and learning

7C.46 Stoke officers are very positive about the position they have achieved on travel plans, considering they are a very small authority with limited resources and a regeneration-driven agenda. There has been a lot of 'small wins' including those achieved under their own workplace travel plan such as the introduction of a system for promoting the use of annual bus tickets. They have also gathered a lot of information through their efforts on school travel plans and developed a comprehensive School Travel Plan Evidence Checklist.

### **Key achievements**

7C.47 In general terms, key achievements are seen as getting people to change their travel behaviour and getting travel plans higher up the agenda, especially for businesses through their proactive approach to helping secure voluntary plans. Development control officers are now far more aware of the opportunities for travel plans, and more are coming through voluntary agreements:

*"We've made great leaps and bounds, there is now more agreement on travel plans, and feel we are in a good position for the future, as we've learnt a lot from our previous experience. We've developed a great deal of knowledge and expertise, and achieved some small things like our systems and database, which make it much easier to take the agenda forward. We just need the new policy base now..."*

7C.48 Monitoring results are considered to be encouraging, with progress being made towards the Single Occupancy Vehicle reduction target, and annual surveys showing significant increases in bus use and cycling.

### **Key barriers**

7C.49 The priority of regeneration over other objectives is inevitably seen as a barrier in terms of what could have been secured through travel plans. Resources have also been an issue – *"we could have done some things sooner, it sometimes takes a long time and development control needs a new system for compliance with conditions."* Similarly, the lack of a robust policy framework has hindered progress. Changes in the planning system have delayed the establishment of a clear policy base within which to seek more challenging travel plans, but officers are hopeful that the LDF system will finally give them the firm policy base they crave.

### **Key learning points**

7C.50 Despite the barriers mentioned, Stoke officers consider that they have got better through experience - by learning 'on the job' - and through spreading the word. Internal communications have been important in this context – 'working from within' and using in-house newsletters to get the message out to staff and clients. Simple things – like changing terminology on planning application responses from 'highways comments' to 'transport comments' has reinforced this approach.

### **Key recommendations for future guidance**

7C.51 Stoke officers had a number of thoughts on how new government guidance could assist them in delivering effective travel plans:

- Clearer advice on the use of section 106 agreements, including reassurance on legitimacy, legality, enforcement and the inclusion of penalty charges, plus the associated inclusion of a monitoring charge if section 106 is used to secure travel plans
- Stronger recommendations on the value of a robust policy base, to give more backing to resist challenges and refusals (i.e. not an add on)
- Guidance that is respectful of differing areas and regions and the particular problems and priorities of each (i.e. say 'can' put penalties in rather than 'must', to reflect local priorities, and no national standards as they tend to be London-based)
- More encouragement to assisting businesses in developing voluntary travel plans, perhaps in the context of the Climate Change Bill, given that few may come through the planning process in areas of lower development pressure

## **6. Senior officer perspective**

7C.52 The Senior Officer comments are included in the general narrative of this study.

## **7. Member perspective**

7C.53 Members' perspectives on travel plans are reflected in earlier sections. Officers are aware that some members see regeneration and inward investment as higher priorities than sustainable transport. There are also some training needs, especially around parking provision and the wider benefits of travel plans. It is sometimes hard to convince members to approve residential development with less than two parking spaces per dwelling. Members consider some recent developments with lower parking provision are of poorer environmental quality because of the amount of on-street parking caused by the reduction in parking spaces. They have also wanted to refuse a development with one parking space per dwelling and a travel plan package on these grounds.

## **8. Previous Case Study Example**

### **Royal Doulton Headquarters, Forge Lane, Stoke**

7C.54 The travel plan for the Royal Doulton headquarters in Forge Lane, Stoke was secured by a condition on a planning application and implemented in 2002. Officers consider that overall, the travel plan was successful, due in part to the willingness of the developer/occupier to engage enthusiastically, to work proactively, and to follow the measures through.

7C.56 These measures included on-site facilities such as picnic tables to encourage staff to lunch on the premises, and cycle storage/showering facilities. Off-site improvements included improvements to a bridge over the nearby canal to improve conditions for walkers and cyclists, and working with other local businesses to get a bus route diverted to serve the employment sites in Forge Lane more effectively. The company also supported Council initiatives such as Car Free Day, and provided a lot of travel information to staff. A key success was seen as the way in which Royal Doulton got other businesses involved in travel planning ideas, even though there was no legal requirement to do so.

7C.57 A less successful element was the takeover of Royal Doulton by Wedgwood, and the subsequent relocation of the headquarters staff to the existing Wedgwood

site on the edge of the city. No formal travel plan monitoring was undertaken because of this takeover and relocation. However, officers commented that the key players were still enthusiastic about the benefits of travel planning; they keep in touch with the travel plan team, are telling other businesses to get involved and are currently writing a new travel plan for the new site.

7C.58 The key lessons learnt from this example by officers were:

- the value of the developer and occupier being the same organisation
- the benefits of giving the occupier a lot of help in the early stages
- the need to really go for the corporate 'buy in' to get long-term ownership and commitment

7C.59 With hindsight, officers consider they were clear about the targets, outcomes and measures required at the time, but would be more stringent now. *"It was great at the time, but now the process has evolved, we have more information available and more experience in what we could ask for."* There were no sanctions or penalties for under performance or failure to deliver measures to meet targets

### **Officer thoughts on how the process could be improved**

7C.60 From their experiences on this and other projects, Stoke officers had a number of thoughts on how the travel plan process could be improved in the future, whether for travel plans secured through the planning system, or through voluntary action:

- Provide and secure funding to put a local authority based travel plan co-ordinator in large businesses for one day a week, for example, in the early stages, to help in achieving measures and to help organisations work more closely with their neighbours and service providers – perhaps through a travel plan network approach for an area or city
- More media coverage nationally of the benefits of travel plan issues – linked with a national campaign, as there is still a lot to do around educating the public and businesses
- Publication of more best practice case studies, including updates as processes evolve, plus a free advice service for local authorities and businesses
- Government guidance that can support a more stringent and stricter approach, including a stronger policy backing and advice on the legality of agreements, sanctions and penalties if required
- The PPG13 recommendations need to be followed up by a requirement to meet targets - e.g. achieve x% reduction travel to work by car, plus ring fenced resources to help
- An updated version of the Travel Plan Resource Pack for Employers – either web-based or loose leaf format, so that updates can be easily spotted, thus saving time for busy businesses, and hopefully making it easier for them to pick up changes

## **9. Key points of interest**

7C.61 Stoke are doing a lot of good work around travel planning, despite the disadvantages of:

- the lack of an effective policy base
- being in an area with lower development pressures

- being a very small authority with limited resources and sometimes conflicting priorities between regeneration and sustainable transport
- lack of confidence, knowledge and experience in anything other than using conditions to secure travel plans through the planning system

7C.61 Successes are coming through:

- their proactive partnership approach to working with local businesses, over a period of time if necessary, and in offering practical assistance such as survey analysis
- developing their experience and expertise, and learning through earlier projects
- their willingness to work in partnership with other agencies and partners, and particularly to work with adjoining authorities to get a consistent policy approach
- seeking small wins to build on in the future
- working from within the organisation to lead by example
- the use of a small grant system to 'sell' the travel plan concept and to get businesses to engage on a voluntary basis, to compensate for the sometimes limited opportunities arising through the planning system

**Interviewees:**

Paul Edwards, Development Control Manager

Paul Feehily, Assistant Director, Planning Policy and Development

Austin Knott, Team Manager, Transportation Policy

John Nichol, Transport Planning Manager,

Debbie Turner, Travel Plan Co-ordinator, Workplaces

## **D - Surrey County Council**

### **1. Background and overall approach**

7D.1 Surrey County Council has been proactive in seeking travel plans for a number of years. Following a significant re-organisation of the Council, a new 'Smarter and Safer Travel Team' was created in June 2006 to take responsibility for developing travel plans. This team encompasses travel plans secured through the planning system, school travel plans, and, increasingly importantly, voluntary company travel plans that contribute to the wider travel plan network.

7D.2 Within the 'Smarter' element of the team, four staff are responsible for travel plans on a geographical basis across the eleven boroughs and districts in Surrey, working closely with officers in the Council's transportation development control team, also within the Environment and Regulation Service Division. The geographical split is seen as being advantageous in building links with the districts and boroughs (who are the statutory Local Planning Authorities), and in building on local area knowledge. The County Council is only a planning authority in waste and minerals applications, but is a highway authority and statutory consultee on other planning matters. It is through this role that Surrey seeks to achieve its policies and objectives to promote and secure sustainable travel.

### **Travel plan experience and effectiveness**

7D.3 Surrey County Council, in conjunction with the eleven boroughs and districts, has secured 190 travel plans through the planning process in the past six years, 32 of which have been implemented. Many of the early plans (110) were secured through the use of planning conditions, with 80 more recently secured through section 106 agreements. Officers commented that *“Section 106 agreements are the preferred method for securing travel plans, because of better enforcement and greater detailing and specification, but we have little influence over choice of securing mechanism as we are not the planning authority for most planning applications (apart from Minerals and Waste).”*

7D.4 Despite being a relatively new team, with officers in post for less than a year, they consider they have increased their success rate in recent years and have learnt from earlier experiences, but commented:

*“The impression that officers involved in travel plans have within Surrey is that other authorities look on our County as being leaders in the field. We may be when compared with some other authorities, but when this is looked at in respect of:*

- *Actual numbers of travel plans actively being operated compared to those that have been secured*
- *The sites where travel plans were accepted to off-set allowing developments in unsustainable locations (contrary to PPG13 para 89) or on previously developed sites where it was not possible to prevent redevelopment*
- *The numbers and quality of monitoring reports produced by those travel plans in operation*
- *The ability of Surrey County Council officers to impose punitive measures on newly negotiated Travel Plans*
- *The extent to which the Standard Assessment Methodology for travel plan monitoring, consistent with TRICS, has actually been implemented to date.*

*... there is still much to do.”*

7D.5 This comment was reinforced by a recognition that work needed to be done in terms of putting better policies, guidance and internal systems in place, and in seeking higher quality plans. The new team has (April 2007) produced a ‘Travel Plans Good Practice Guide’ to take these aspirations forward, and is working on improvements to its internal information monitoring systems.

### **Objectives and commitment**

7D.6 Surrey County Council’s objectives for securing sustainable travel are embedded in national, regional and local policy documents. The Good Practice Guide describes how the County Council “intends to use the planning process to secure travel plans to improve and promote sustainable travel. This helps to break the link between development and increased congestion and pollution. Through this approach, travel plans aim to improve the quality of life for everyone in Surrey by facilitating development that is socially and economically beneficial and environmentally sustainable. This aim is entirely consistent with the County Council’s vision to be ‘an outstanding Council, making Surrey a better place’.”

7D.7 Officers are keen to be proactive and work more broadly on community travel plans, and to build up area-based travel plan networks encompassing all workplace, school and voluntary travel plans. They see great potential in

assisting the development of voluntary travel plans, particularly in areas where there are fewer opportunities to secure them through the planning process, and where the need to 'sell' the travel plan concept may deliver more results and 'plug gaps' in the network. It is also hoped that the area network approach will keep the engagement of those organisations required by planning agreements to implement travel plans after the formal monitoring/feedback period ends.

### **Key partners**

- 7D.8 Surrey County Council considers there are a number of key partners or players with whom they must engage to secure and deliver travel plans. These include:
- their own members and senior officers (policy development and funding)
  - Borough and district council members and officers (decision takers on planning applications)
  - Parish councils, who have the opportunity to develop parish-wide travel plans, as Chobham Parish Council is doing, with encouragement from the county council
  - transport operators
  - the development industry
  - commercial companies, including those supporting the Surrey Car Share Network (see <https://www.liftshare.org/secsites/surreycarshare/default.asp> )
  - other transport providers including car club operators such as Streetcar
  - Other players who may emerge on a site specific basis, such as the Highways Agency, where discussions have been held on a key site on the Surrey Research Park adjacent to the A3 in Guildford, and where a feasibility study is being undertaken to see if travel plan measures could obviate the need for the construction of a new roundabout

## **2. Policy and process for securing travel plans**

7D.9 The Travel Plans Good Practice Guide sets out the specific policies that are relevant to travel planning in Surrey at the national and regional level including PPG 13 and the Regional Transport Strategy. The latter states:

*..that Local Transport Plans that are submitted by County Councils should require a Travel Plan to be produced for all major traffic generating developments, by 2010.*

7D.10 Surrey County Council aims to improve the quality of life for everyone in Surrey, both current and future generations. This vision is described in the 'Surrey Community Strategy'. It contains the sustainable transport themes to protect the environment, use natural resources wisely and care for people. Specific policies that are relevant to travel planning at County level are:

- **Surrey Structure Plan 2004**  
Policy DN2 'The Movement Implications of Development' states development should only be permitted where it is, or can be made, compatible with the transport infrastructure in the area and requires developers to promote non-car transport.  
Policy LO1 'The Location of Development' and Policy DN3 'Parking Provision' are also complementary to sustainable transport objectives.
- **Surrey Local Transport Plan 2006-11**

The purpose of the Local Transport Plan is to set out the County Councils strategy for improving Surrey's transport system over a five-year period, with particular emphasis on sustainable transport infrastructure improvement and use. The plan also secures Government funding to achieve the aims.

The main objectives are:

1. Tackling congestion to limit delays
2. Improving accessibility to key services / facilities
3. Improving road safety and security
4. Enhancing the environment and quality of life

7D.11 The Good Practice Guide reiterates that the objectives of travel plans should integrate and support the above objectives. The County Council also strives to influence local policy through discussions on the development of District and Borough Local Development Frameworks and related policy documents.

### **Supplementary planning guidance and documents**

7D.12 Surrey County Council does not produce supplementary planning documents, as it is not the Local Planning Authority. It has, however, recently (April 2007) produced its own 'Travel Plans Good Practice Guidance' that has been adopted by the Council in a similar process following consultation. This document is a comprehensive guide to the County Council's requirements, policies, and procedures for securing travel plans through the planning process. It sets out the procedure for assessing, securing and auditing travel plans, including detailed guidance on thresholds, timing, the types of plans, their structure and content, monitoring requirements, and the fee structure for auditing purposes. It also clearly links the Transport Assessment with the travel plan. This guidance is available from the council's website under 'Your Environment' section – see [www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk) then search the site for 'Travel Plans Good Practice Guide'.

7D.13 The Council also has an earlier document 'Transportation Development Control Good Practice Guide,' which includes references to travel plans, including a standard condition for use on smaller applications. The council website also includes earlier guidance on 'Mini Travel Plans' for small sites and 'What is a Company Travel Plan?' guidance for voluntary plans.

7D.14 Collectively, these documents provide guidance on the benefits of travel plans, measures they could contain, sample staff travel survey questionnaires and contacts for further assistance. See [www.surreycc.gov.uk](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk) then navigate to Roads and Transport, then Traffic and Parking for these documents.

### **Thresholds and requirements**

7D.15 The SCC Good Practice Guide Chapter 3 sets out the thresholds and requirements for travel plans as reproduced (in part) in the extract below:

- 3.1 *The decision to request a Travel Plan (TP) is influenced by the scale of development, using the guidance thresholds in Figure 1 (can be viewed in full document).*
- 3.2 *These thresholds are consistent with the thresholds for requesting a Transport Assessment (TA), as set out in PPG13 Transport and in TA guidance published in 2007, by the Department for Transport and Department for Communities and Local Government. Since the thresholds are the same and therefore most developments featuring a TA will also*

include a TP, the TP should reflect the travel outcomes estimated in the TA. SCC will issue further guidance concerning TAs for developments in Surrey, in due course.

- 3.3 By setting threshold guidance for requirements for Travel Plans through the planning process, the County Council has met the aspiration in PPG13 (Appendix D para 87) that local authorities should set local targets for the adoption of Travel Plans.
- 3.4 These thresholds are guidelines only and Travel Plans may also be requested for developments below these thresholds. This could be where a development would generate significant amounts of travel in, or near to, an area with a particular environmental problem or congestion, for example:
  - air quality management areas,
  - protected habitat areas; or
  - other locations with local initiatives or targets set out in the Development Plan or Local Transport Plan for the reduction of road traffic, and / or the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling.
- 3.5 Even when a Travel Plan is requested for a development below the guideline thresholds, an auditing fee will be requested.
- 3.6 However, unacceptable development will not be permitted, just because a Travel Plan is proposed.

### **Process and responsibilities for securing plans**

7D.16 Officers stress the value of being involved early in pre-application discussions with developers, and of establishing early in the process whether a skeleton or full travel plan will be required. Chapter 5 of the Good Practice Guide explains the requirements and their rationale:

#### **Pre-application discussions**

- 5.2 The County Council will meet with developers to discuss opportunities at an early stage to discuss and agree the scope of Travel Plans. In order to respond to a planning application quickly and within Government targets, a Travel Plan should be submitted to the County Council before a planning application is submitted. If a Travel Plan is not agreed prior to submitting an application, it may delay the granting of planning permission. (The end-to-end process for the planning process where a travel plan is required is mapped in Appendix B of the Guide).
- 5.3 County officers will also aim to facilitate discussions with other relevant groups such as the Public Transport Co-ordination Centre and the County Council Cycling Officer.
- 5.4 If an extension of an existing site is proposed and a travel plan already exists, the existing plan should be revised in light of the proposed development, rather than writing a new travel plan.

#### **Skeleton or Full Travel Plan?**

- 5.5 If a travel plan is requested (based on the guidance in Section 4), developers should agree with the County Council whether a full or skeleton Travel Plan is required.
- 5.6 A skeleton travel plan will be requested for speculative developments, housing developments or any other proposal where the end users are not yet known. It should contain targets, wherever possible. These should be linked to the estimated trip rates and/or modal split projections in the Transport



*Assessment. It will have the same aims and structure as a full Travel Plan, but with less detail on how measures will be implemented.*

- 5.7 *For example, a full Travel Plan may state that the building occupier will run a shuttle bus every 15 mins to / from the local railway station for 2 hours every weekday morning and evening. A skeleton Travel Plan would commit to running a shuttle bus between the site and local destinations with the details of service times and frequency to be agreed once information about staff travel is established.*
- 5.8 *In the time between planning permission being granted and first occupation, a full Travel Plan should be produced and submitted for approval.*
- 5.9 *If the site occupier is known from the outset, e.g. an extension to existing site or a commissioned development where an occupier is moving from another site, a full Travel Plan will be requested before planning permission is granted.*

7D.17 More often, the County Council, as local highway authority, uses its role as a statutory consultee on planning matters to secure travel plans through the planning process. The eleven districts and boroughs submit their weekly planning application lists to the transportation development control team, who flag up where they think a travel plan should be requested, as a formal recommendation on the application. The LPA then adds this to their case report submitted to their Planning Committee for decision, or through delegated authority powers.

7D.18 The County Council then gets involved in the detailed development of the travel plan, including establishing standards and monitoring requirements, usually by being a signatory to the section 106 agreement, or by delegating authority to the local council.

7D.19 Officers hope that the production of their Good Practice Guide will result in more plans being negotiated and agreed in advance of planning applications being submitted, with consequently less reliance on picking up requirements and opportunities once the pressure to determine applications within target timescales is on. Overall, officers consider this two-tier process to be adequate, if not ideal, but have concerns around consistency between the eleven authorities.

7D.20 There are also concerns around addressing the cumulative impact of new housing developments where the previous national threshold of 100 units has been the trigger for a travel plan, yet the implications of developments just below this figure are not being addressed. One instance is at Horley, where an eventual development of 2000 units will go ahead in phases. It has been agreed that travel plans will be sought for developments below 100 units, in the context of developing a travel plan network for the area. The Good Practice Guide now sets the C3 use threshold at 80 units to reflect this issue. Establishing area-based working (one officer to deal with specific districts or boroughs), early involvement in pre-application discussions and developing local standards, as at Horley, may go some way towards addressing these concerns.

### ***Evaluation of incoming travel plans***

7D.21 Surrey officers evaluate incoming travel plans through the use of their in house assessment criteria, which is based on a template to review the structure and content of a travel plan. This is supplemented by reference to their checklist of travel plan contents as set out in the Good Practice Guide and the targets

derived for the particular site or area. A Feedback for Action proforma is used to highlight gaps and inadequacies back to the developer and as an internal monitoring tool to plot progress in developing a robust plan.

7D.22 Officers are satisfied with this approach but recognise that as a new team they are still continuing to gain an understanding of the standards expected, and the need for consistency of approach between team members. The DfT Workplace Travel Plan Evaluation Tool is not currently used, with officers preferring to use their own tools and developing expertise and local knowledge.

7D.23 TRICS by the Standard Assessment Methodology (SAM) is used as the right tool to assess whether a travel plan document is meeting the required standard. Officers commented that they use TRICS to help estimate impact of a new development in terms of trip generation, against the transport assessment, increasingly by requesting multi-modal counts from sites with travel plans, to improve the quality of the database for making accurate future predictions. They would also like to see improved data in TRICS.

### **Targets, measures and monitoring processes**

7D.24 Targets for travel plans must be linked to the targets in the Surrey Local Transport Plan 2006/7 – 2010/11 as set out in Chapter 6 of the Good Practice Guide below:

*The purpose of the plan is to attract Government funding for all forms of transport in Surrey. It includes a strategy, objectives, targets and an implementation programme setting out transport improvements which need to be carried out over the next five years. Only targets relevant to Travel Plans are included below.*

<b>Objective 1: Tackling congestion to limit delays</b>	
Peak period flows	Ensure that peak flows to Hubs (Woking, Guildford and Reigate / Redhill) do not increase above the levels in the base year of 2005/6
Area wide traffic	Limit traffic growth to 1% per annum and 5.5% between 2004 and 2010. NB: Background traffic growth will take up all on the anticipated growth on roads up to 2011 and consequently, to meet aims of LTP, new traffic generators i.e. developments seeking planning permission, should set challenging targets for their baselines and seek to reduce their traffic impact over time.
<b>Objective 2: Increasing accessibility to key services / facilities</b>	
Mode Share for 16-19 education	Reduce proportion of students travelling by car to post 16 education by 5% between 2004 and 2010
Mode Share for journeys to school	Reduce percentage of children travelling to school by car (only passenger): 5-10 year olds from 42% in 2004 to 36% in 2010 11-16 year-olds from 28% in 2004 to 22% in 2010
Public Transport Patronage	Increase from 24.2 million in 2004/05 to 25.8 million in 2010/11
Cycling	Increase by 20% between 2004 and 2010
Cycle Parking at railway stations	Increase by 25% between 2005 and 2010
<b>Objective 3: Improving road safety and security</b>	
Number of KSI	Reduction from average of 932 in 94-98 to 386 by 2010 (58%)
Number of KSI (children)	Reduction from average of 84 in 94-98 to 28 by 2010 (67%)
Reduce slight casualties	Reduction from average of 6,635 in 94-98 to 5,786 by 2010 (13%)
<b>Objective 4: Enhancing the environment and quality of life</b>	

Concentration of Nitrogen Dioxide at receptor 9 in Spelthorne	Reduction of 1.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ below the baseline
Area Wide Traffic	Limit growth to 1% per year between 2004 and 2010
<b>Objective 5: Improving maintenance and management of our transport network</b>	
Condition of Footway condition	No deterioration in condition between 2004/05 and 2010/11

### Targets

6.6 Targets should be clearly worded as measurements of the objectives and relate to outcomes forecast by the site's Transport Assessment. They should be linked to the targets in the Surrey Local Transport Plan. Developers should bear in mind that background traffic growth will make up all the anticipated growth on roads up to 2011 and consequently, to meet aims of LTP, new traffic generating developments should seek to reduce their traffic impact over time.

6.7 Targets should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed). For example:

- Modal split with particular attention to reducing the proportion of single occupancy car journeys and increasing non-car travel (targets for first year and subsequent years);
- Total number of vehicle trips (to be reduced compared to baseline);
- Number of complaints from residents in surrounding streets regarding off-site parking (aim for zero);
- Proposed reductions in on-site car parking over time;
- Proportion of staff / visitors / residents who have positive attitudes towards sustainable travel options.

### Measures

7D.25 Measures to achieve the targets above are set out in detail in Chapter Six of the Good Practice Guide. A key requirement on larger developments is the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator.

### Monitoring

7D.26 Monitoring processes for previously agreed travel plans currently run for five years, with annual monitoring taking place one year after first occupation. For newly agreed travel plans (Feb 07 onwards) the monitoring requirements are more prescriptive as set out in Chapter 5 of the Good Practice Guide. These can run for nine years with monitoring required every other year and ending after five years for good performance. The guide provides details of two types of monitoring – the nature of the data to be collected depends on the nature of the site. The types of data, the frequency of surveys and the requirements for feedback are set out in detail in order to ensure that consistent and comparable data is collected across the county. The use of the TRICS Standard Assessment Methodology (SAM) is prescribed in some cases to ensure independence. Developers are required to fund the gathering of monitoring data.

### Funding for monitoring

7D.27 Funding contributions for monitoring, or auditing, the term preferred by the Council, are also set out in Chapter Five of the Good Practice Guide.

### **Fee for Surrey County Council Travel Plan Auditing Officer**

5.22 *The county council also requires developers to contribute to the cost of auditing activities of County staff. Auditing fees are set out in Appendix A (included below). This covers ongoing supervision and auditing by County staff for nine (or five) years after the implementation of the travel plan.*

5.23 *The auditing fee is payable before building works start. If you do not intend to implement your planning permission immediately, acknowledge this in your Travel Plan and state your commitment to paying the auditing fee before you start building your development.*

*Auditing Fees: The County Council requires developers or other planning applicants to contribute towards the costs of supervising and auditing travel plans for up to nine years after occupation. The fee is a one off payment, and is also set out in the guide.*

*Where an application is for a mixed development, the development type with the greatest amount above the threshold will be used to decide the fee level. For example, for a site with 2700m<sup>2</sup> B1 Office space (8% over threshold) and 160 units residential (60% over threshold), the fee would be £6000. The maximum fee is £6000 even if more than one land use were at the higher charge.*

### **Use of conditions, agreements, contributions, sanctions and enforcement**

7D.28 The Surrey Good Practice Guide states that Planning Agreements (Section 106) and Unilateral Undertakings will be used to secure travel plans for larger and more complex developments. Following pre-application discussions, draft heads of terms are prepared by the Council's Legal Team at an early stage to agree the scope of the travel plan, and to ensure that it can be drawn up and submitted for approval in advance of the submission of the planning application, to streamline the process. These heads of terms are taken from the key elements required for a travel plan as set out in the Good Practice Guide. Planning conditions have also been used to secure travel plans for smaller developments.

- **Typical Condition wording (from Transportation Development Control Good Practice Guide)**

Standard Condition HC13 Travel Plan (as used on smaller applications)

*Prior to the commencement of the development the applicant shall:*

- Submit for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority a Travel Plan in accordance with the aims and objectives of PPGN13 (March 2001) and the Government White Paper (July 1998) and in general accordance with the 'Heads of Travel Plan' document (if appropriate, specify).*
- The applicant shall then implement the approved travel plan (trigger point to be added on site specific basis) and for each subsequent occupation of the development, thereafter maintain and develop the travel plan to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.*

Contributions towards auditing by Surrey CC staff are as set out as above.

7D.29 Officers do not see enforcement as a positive way forward; it is not seen to be in the spirit of what they are trying to achieve, and difficult to action on older plans

that were of lower quality and thus difficult to implement. These problems on earlier travel plans have made them aware of the need to ensure that plans are robust so that enforcement is not needed, but also that plans are legally binding. None of the approved plans have included financial penalties for failure to deliver measures or to achieve outcome targets, or financial incentives for achieving the delivery of measures and achieving outcome targets.

- 7D.30 Officers consider that 'it is very difficult to set punitive penalties that can either stop what has happened or mitigate adverse impacts of failure to meet targets. Often there will be no realistic further investment opportunities for non-car modes, as these options will have been exhausted at the planning stage. There will also rarely be opportunities for increasing capacity of the local road network as last resort. The only really punitive measures are:
- a) 'prohibition of further phases in a staged development
  - b) removal of parking spaces provided you can prevent off site overspill parking'

7D.31 The preferred approach to corrective action is through negotiation, amendments to the plan, implementation of additional measures and, in one instance, outside mediation. This approach was used when targets in a landmark travel plan were not achieved, as an alternative to enforcement. Officers commented that 'all parties found it to be a useful and positive process which overcame some entrenched and immovable positions on both sides.' Chapter Five of The Good Practice Guide sets out the Council's policy on sanctions and enforcement:

### **Sanctions and Enforcement**

- 5.24 *If you do not implement your Travel Plan sufficiently or consistently fail to meet your targets, you must establish the underlying reasons. Further action will be requested by the county council to get a plan back on course.*
- 5.25 *Future phases of planning permission and the funding of additional measures may be tied to the performance of the Travel Plan. Failure to achieve agreed targets could lead to withholding further development permission or the requirement to fund further measures. The Travel Plan should explain potential remedial measures that may be drawn upon and state the circumstances when they may be used.*
- 5.26 *In exceptional cases, these may be used in conjunction with planning enforcement or legal action, but only as a last resort after reasonable negotiations have not achieved satisfactory improvements. The use of independent experts to act as mediators may be pursued in cases where a stalemate has been reached.*

### **Involvement of members, stakeholders and transport operators**

7D.32 The two-tier relationship between Surrey County Council and its eleven constituent districts and boroughs means that SCC members are rarely involved in decisions on applications and travel plans. Their role is one of providing the strategic guidance and context through which the County Council, as Highway but not Local Planning Authority, can seek to meet its sustainable travel objectives (one of 5 Key Priorities of the Council) through the planning system.

7D.33 SCC Executive Members have recently approved the Travel Plans Good Practice Guidance, and will be receiving training as part of its launch. Officers commented

that there is no 'Safer and Smarter' Committee, with reporting lines currently falling between the Environment and Transport responsibilities. SCC officers are concerned that borough and district council members, who are responsible for taking decisions on planning applications, still do not fully see the benefits of travel plans at the planning stage. Some local members do not wish to deter investors from coming to Surrey by seeking challenging travel plans through the planning system.

- 7D.34 Local stakeholders including the public are likely to be involved at the local rather than county level, and in response to development proposals being considered by the local council. Other stakeholders (including major companies and bodies such as Surrey University), have been involved through the planning process and through the discussions around long-term aspirations for their sites. For the future, Surrey officers would like to be more proactive in their dealings with major landowners, and to encourage the development of voluntary company travel plans as part of their aspirations for the Surrey Travel Plan Network. Other partnerships, such as the Dorking Decongestion Forum, have played a role in setting up sustainable travel measures such as car share schemes.
- 7D.35 The commercial nature of public transport provision in Surrey results in a complicated relationship with transport providers, and with varying levels of commitment, which has proved frustrating at times when trying to implement travel plans. However, the Council has a mechanism for engaging with local transport operators for negotiating/securing service improvements through travel plans. It has successfully included measures to promote and resource public transport service improvements in a number of agreed travel plans.

### 3. Implementation

- 7D.36 Implementation of agreed travel plans is often a tripartite process led by the Safer and Smarter Team, working with the Transportation DC Team, and sometimes the relevant district or borough officers. Multidisciplinary working with representatives inside and outside the local authorities is encouraged. The Good Practice Guide sets out the requirements and context by which secured travel plans should be implemented. Other systems such as iTRACE are not currently used by Surrey. Officers consider the monitoring requirements being built into travel plans now through the new Good Practice Guidance and increasingly being secured by the use of section 106 agreements or unilateral undertakings will go a long way to ensuring that developers provide the Council with good monitoring data. They are also planning to develop more robust internal monitoring systems to aid in tracking implementation and performance against targets. The Guidance states:

#### ***Travel Plan Implementation***

- 5.10 *The Travel Plan should be implemented on the first occupation of a completed development or extension. In the case of residential developments, the Travel Plan should be implemented before occupation e.g. informing potential buyers of the travel facilities as part of the marketing process.*
- 5.11 *In some cases, where a critical mass of residents or companies to use a service is required, different stages of the travel plan may be implemented*



















































































































































































**Overview of Case Study Practice** based on interviews in early 2007 for Travel Plan guidance Update [shaded boxes indicate potential good practice]

<b>Subject</b>	<b>B'ham</b>	<b>Sheffield</b>	<b>Stoke</b>	<b>Surrey</b>	<b>Devon</b>	<b>Test Valley</b>	<b>Leeds</b>	<b>N'ham</b>	<b>H'don</b>	<b>Isl'ton</b>	<b>HA</b>
<b>No. of travel plans</b>	215	129	62	190	60	29	215	39	20	24	
<b>Policy relating to Travel Plans</b>	West Midlands LTP (from WM RSS) – by 2011 30% of all employees in organisations with Travel Plan	South Yorkshire LTP	Not in place	SE Regional Transport Strategy states that CC LTPs should require TP by 2010	Devon CC Structure Plan and LTPs include an explicit policy re <i>Managing Travel Demand</i>	Clear policy and triggers for TPs set out in Local Plan plus refers to smaller sites; clear link between TA and TP	Draft Yorkshire & Humber's RSS Transport Strategy has TPs as key element w/objective to reduce travel demand	Robust LTP refers to Travel Plan as way to meet sustainability objectives; detailed policy developing	Draft LDF	Sustainable Transport Strategy 2006	Robust policy set out in Circular Roads 2/2007
<b>SPD on Travel Plans</b>	None	SPG available on web; have early SPG and working towards sustainable travel SPD	None	Not LPA so not able to produce	Not LPA	None	Draft SPD soon to be published; links TA and TP	None	None	1999 Green Travel Plan SPG in place; updated Sustainable Transport SPD proposed	Not LPA
<b>Published Travel Plan information</b>	None	Includes ref. to TPs in supporting documents for planning applications	None	'Travel Plans Good Practice Guide' sets out clearly policies, procedures and requirements	Have LDF Briefing Papers for LPAs on Devon Travel Strategy, TA and TPs	Guide sets out relationship between TP and TA	None	Encourages support for sustainable travel through "Big Wheel" information website	None	North Central Travel Plan Network produced Business Travel Plans Resource Pack	None

Subject	B'ham	Sheffield	Stoke	Surrey	Devon	Test Valley	Leeds	N'ham	H'don	Isl'ton	HA
<b>Triggers for requiring Travel Plan</b>	Vague; not linked to TA	Thresholds for TA & TP mainly based on size of site; for Res. Dev, formal TP not expected but dev. should promote travel choice	None except PPG 13 thresholds	Thresholds published - links TA & TP; Consistent with TA Guidance (2007) thresholds; Res Dev TP req'd over 80 units	Thresholds based on PPG13 plus all new Res. Dev. over 50 dwellings	Triggers for TP with thresholds for the TA; vary from TA thresholds so that smaller dev. included	Based on thresholds for TA in 2007 TA Guidance	Generally triggered when TA needed (based on 2007 TA Guidance) though can request	LDF draft sets out thresholds; not related to TA Guidance e.g. Res. Dev >30 units; businesses with > 20 employees	Have clear triggers (TfL) for TPs (differ from TA) and focus on employee levels >25	Additional trips on the Highway Network
<b>Fees/Funding Travel Plan Work</b>	None to date; funded by Council, including analysis of surveys	None to date; except for Res. TPs where monitoring service offered at cost/unit	None to date	One-off fee for auditing; fee scale related to size & use & set out in Good Practice Guide	None to date	None to date	Fees set out in SPD	Policy is to seek through S106	Intend to secure funding from developer	None to date	N/A
<b>Process for internal co-ordination</b>	DC lead	Pre-application process includes TP Officer	Close working between planning and highway DC teams	Team specialising in TPs; internal procedures; Checking Weekly Lists	Briefing through LDF docs; Checking Weekly Lists	DC lead; work with County	Internal guidance notes	Departmental structure & City operation of PT facilitate integration	Internal protocols and joint working arrangements	Internal briefing document on negotiating S106; also 'team' approach.	N/A
<b>Pre-applic. process</b>	No specific requirement for TPs	2-stage pre-application process (1st agreeing assumptions then produce TA/TP)	TP Coordinator participates in pre-application discussions	TP submitted to CC pre-application; front load process		Aim to agree targets at pre-application stage	TP Team not engaged in pre-application	Travel Plan Officer participates in pre-application discussions	Pre-application discussions take place	Dev Team approach	Ideally HA involved at this stage.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>B'ham</b>	<b>Sheffield</b>	<b>Stoke</b>	<b>Surrey</b>	<b>Devon</b>	<b>Test Valley</b>	<b>Leeds</b>	<b>N'ham</b>	<b>H'don</b>	<b>Isl'ton</b>	<b>HA</b>
<b>Targets</b>	Aims to reduce employee car commuting levels by 10% in each affiliated company	LTP target is 60% car use for new businesses; targets for individual sites are still subject to negotiation	Overall target to reduce SOV trips by 10% over 3 years	LTP includes range of targets for different modes (also air quality /accidents)	Modal shift targets over 3 years; case by case	5-10% reduction in SOV car use (can only be finalized after occupation)	Broad target of 10-20% reduction in SOVs; based on local analysis linked to TA surveys	Target of 69% for companies; 20% of employees covered by commuter TP	Parking restraint then targets to reduce trip levels	Employee based targets; follow TfL; targets on modal shift	Developing targets and thresholds
<b>Corporate stance</b>	Corporate support	Fairly positive	Partnership working and training supported	Members supportive	Corporate support	Corporate support; Members recognize value of TPs	Not supportive	Passive support	Members rarely involved; Officers commitment limited by resources	Strong corporate support; TP/S106 subject to Member involvement	
<b>External Co-ordination (other than Travel Forum)</b>	Working with PTE & operators; car club provided	PCT, CoC, HA, Car Club	CC, HA	HA; Car Share Network; Car Club operators	Transport operators, HA, Car Share scheme	CC (Hants) - who handle largest developments	PTE; Core Cities Group on TP; contract with car club	Core Cities Group	Participate in 2 Trans. Policy Strategic partnerships (which have TP coordinators)	Council signed up to single car club operator and successful	Must work jointly to achieve objectives
<b>Travel Forums or similar</b>	Company Travel Wise membership is required of occupier; provides info and support	None mentioned	Offers grants up to £5000 to companies developing TPs	Area based TP Network approach; occupiers expected to join wider network after 9 years	Grant scheme- 50% match funded grants up to £4000 for measures arising from voluntary TPs		W Yorkshire TP Network - linked to Travelwise W. Yorkshire	N'ham Commuter Planners Club; E Midlands Travelwise Group; Grant Scheme	Little support for organisations wishing to undertake TPs	Travel Plan network-across borough working	N/A



<b>Subject</b>	<b>B'ham</b>	<b>Sheffield</b>	<b>Stoke</b>	<b>Surrey</b>	<b>Devon</b>	<b>Test Valley</b>	<b>Leeds</b>	<b>N'ham</b>	<b>H'don</b>	<b>Isl'ton</b>	<b>HA</b>
<b>Evaluation Methodology</b>	No formal method but guidance is given on what successful TP should contain	Use their own Checklist, not DfT Evaluation Tool nor TRICS	Based on DfT Evaluation Tool but not using scoring element (use officer exp. & local knowledge)	TRICS Std Assess. Method; feedback proforma for action; don't use DfT Evaluation Tool	Don't use DfT Evaluation Tool nor TRICS as consider not appropriate in rural areas	Successful use of DfT Evaluation Tool; recognise it is not appropriate for small sites.	Use their own Checklist	Use their own Checklist of 7 criteria; don't use DfT Evaluation Tool	Use own simple & effective checklist; will move to TfL system; don't use DfT Evaluation Tool	Use TfL guidance and local knowledge; don't use DfT Evaluation Tool	N/A
<b>Use Condition</b>	Standard Planning Condition requires membership in TravelWise	Usually use standard condition, being updated (Also Grampian Condition)	Prefer conditions	Standard conditions used for smaller applications	Approx. 20% secured through conditions; usually smaller applications	Mixed approach; secure measures rather than ask for money (e.g. bus shuttle)	Use conditions	Prefer conditions	Clear standard condition	Generally not use conditions	Grampian Condition sometimes sought
<b>Use S106 Planning Obligation</b>	Not used except for financial contributions	Sometimes used to secure infrastructure - separate from TP	Do not use as don't seek financial contribution; enter into S106 when working w/CC	Prefer S106 agreed prior to planning permission, but are not the LPA	Prefer S106 so can be signatory; approx. 80% TPs secured through S106	S106 used e.g. re securing bonds	Not used except for financial contributions	Policy supports but seen as time-consuming	Prefer S106 agreement for large developments	Generally use S106 agreements (have sample wording)	HA unable to enter into S106; seek other mechanisms i.e. Grampian Conditions
<b>Ensuring approval of TP</b>	Expect affiliation to Travel Wise (not TP) prior to occupation	Detailed TP must be produced prior to occupation	Detailed TP must be produced prior to occupation	Full TP to be submitted prior to occupation	No development before TP approved		Occupier responsible for final TP	Full TP 3-6 mos. After occupation	TP and TP Co-ordinator to be in place 6 mths prior to occupation	Final TP 6 mths. after occupation	Can direct refusal

<b>Subject</b>	<b>B'ham</b>	<b>Sheffield</b>	<b>Stoke</b>	<b>Surrey</b>	<b>Devon</b>	<b>Test Valley</b>	<b>Leeds</b>	<b>N'ham</b>	<b>H'don</b>	<b>Isl'ton</b>	<b>HA</b>
<b>Securing implementation of measures</b>	Travel Planning is voluntary	TP Officer resp. for securing; willing to consider bonds to make TP effective	TP Coordinator works with them as substitute for default mechanism	TP implemented pre-occupation if possible: future phases may be tied to TP performance	Request amendment to TP and/or further measures	Bonds used to secure measures in the event developer fails to do so	Further discussions to achieve corrective action	Council assists to resolve	S106 agreements include mechanism to ensure the delivery of measures	No mechanisms	Seek to have LPA agree effective S106 agreement
<b>Securing achievement of targets</b> <b>e.g. default mechanism</b>	Travel Planning is voluntary	Condition required theatre to include public transport ticket as part of theatre ticket	Developer needs to demonstrate how targets are being met; updated TP may be requested at review dates	External independent mediation	Use default clauses: e.g. fines for excess vehicle. trips; loss of construction traffic site passes; phasing sanctions	None: look at why e.g. allowed reallocation of funds to achieve target (provision cycling facilities instead of bus service)	Some use of penalty charges; e.g. if SOV targets not achieved, company pays £5000 admin. fee & £1000/employee short of the target	TP officer supports and encourages organisation to achieve; have used loss of parking as sanction	No default clauses in S106; negotiate when targets not met	No mechanisms	Sanctions and default mechanisms being developed
<b>Standard Charges/Contribution</b>		Working with PTE to develop contributions matrix based on location, accessibility, car/trip gen. & LU						Investigating Workplace Parking levy		re Res TP: have Standard Contribution of 100 per unit for Sustainable Transport Measures	

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<b>Monitoring Mechanisms</b>	Limited; monitors progress on implementation - aims to have 45% of affiliated companies. Undertake standardised employee travel survey and repeat in 2 years	S. Yorkshire authorities & PTE working together to develop standard monitoring procedure; to require validation by independent external consultant or council	Resource Pack provides guidance but not prescriptive as to key indicators or data collection	Prescriptive re date required to monitor; monitoring reports from occupier audited by CC	Not prescriptive; Ex of Rugby Match Day Access Strategy & TP incl. req. for modal split surveys after 1st event & after first 6 events, & at the end of season	Systems in place re both	Requirement to undertake a travel survey with a min. staff response rate of 75%, if rate below is level the company will have to pay the council £6000 to undertake survey	Council TP Officer does all monitoring - sends out survey in October  [Involve HR department re TP Co-ordinators TP an EO issue due to low car ownership]	S106 requires annual surveys & reviews (done by Council); also identifies key indicators to be monitored; Intend to use <i>i-Trace</i>	Use <i>i-trace</i> for project management; no systematic form of monitoring	Seek effective monitoring arrangements
<b>Period of Monitoring</b>	Occupiers reluctant to do repeat surveys	Annually for 5 years	Initial survey; annual report; review at 3 yrs	Every other year up to 9 yrs but if good practice stop at 5 yrs	Generally annual staff surveys & evaluation report every 3-5 yrs	Annual travel survey	Annual survey for members of W Yorkshire TP Network	Annual surveys	Annually for 5 years		
<b>Enforcement</b>	Not done, though may enforce re affiliation w/TravelWise	Threatened re a breach of condition and secured action	Recognised as weakness	Use mediation rather than enforcement	Prefer to work w/ dev. & occupier to achieve; prefer sanctions	Pursued failure to produce a TP as breach of condition	No resources to enforce	Offers support services to rectify situation	Not done	Few TPs so not yet an issue	