

**CITY OF  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
C O U N C I L**

**Highways and  
Transportation**

**Technical Guidance  
Note**

**July 2016**

## Introduction

For many years the quality and character of the places where we live have been heavily influenced by the needs of motor vehicles. Design quality has been stifled by wide roads with long forward views for the motorist, houses turning their back on distributor roads and the application of rigid highway design standards, regardless of location. However, there have been changes in the last few years as people have expected better quality of design and layout, and in response new guidance has been published with advice on how to achieve better quality of building through the development planning process.

This document is a technical publication, made up of specific transportation topics intended to assist developers, designers and planners to create quality places. The sections reflect the governments most recent planning and policy guidance, initiatives that continue to emerge as the result of research reports, the Guidance on Transport Assessments produced by the Department for Transport (DfT) and is supported by local policies and strategies, including the Local Transport Plan.

Previous guidance offered by City of Wolverhampton Council regarding the design and construction of adopted highway offered developers a clear, structured approach to highway design. But there is now a move towards:

- developments with more individuality and less of a 'one size fits all' approach;
- developments that better reflect and respect local character, for example in terms of layout and architecture;
- developments that better provide for local needs, for example in terms of the shopping or play facilities that they provide;
- higher-quality developments that enhance their surroundings and provide a safe, accessible and attractive environment in which to live, work and play.

Guidance that contains too many unnecessary rules and directions can inhibit innovation for residential layouts and frustrate the principles of good design. It is important that new developments reflect local character and distinctiveness. So, this document will provide you with greater flexibility. In line with our general policies and objectives, it sets out guidance on a range of design elements, materials and landscaping that you can select when you are putting together your development proposals. It also offers flexibility so new or unusual design elements or materials not covered by the guidance can be considered.

However, this approach places greater onus on you to demonstrate that your proposals will operate safely and satisfactorily and meet our policies and objectives because you will not be sticking to a rigid set of guidelines.

We recognise that you may need to carry out more detailed investigations at the pre-planning application stage. But the guidance and procedures set out in this document are intended to help you to prepare your development proposals. And, if you can agree proposals both with us and the planning authority at the pre-application stage, this should save time taken during the planning application stage, the works' technical approval stage and the construction stage.

The various parts of this document relate to the overall development process, from initially considering the site through to completing works. You should follow the guidance so your development proposals progress efficiently.

# City of Wolverhampton Council

## *City Map*

City of Wolverhampton Council is responsible for a range of highways and transport issues including all publicly-maintained highways within the Wolverhampton City boundary.

Wolverhampton's Transportation service deals with those roads which the City as a Highway Authority is responsible for. Within that department, the Transport Strategy Group is responsible for considering how development proposals will affect the highways and transportation infrastructure. It deals with all highways and transportation matters, including:

- discussions with developers before they submit planning applications;
- making recommendations on applications (highway observations) to planning authorities; and
- Travel Plans.

Our New Works group is responsible for;

- construction and adopting works for new development; and
- commuted sums

These departments work closely with other departments within the City Council on development proposals which will have an impact upon City roads. You should contact the Transport Strategy group if you want to discuss highways and transportation aspects of a development proposal.

## Design Principles

We will work with developers and planning authorities to make sure new development is only permitted:

- in areas where there is a choice of safe and accessible methods of transport for all road users (including pedestrians and cyclists);
- on roads suitable for the type of development; and
- if the environment is not harmed, including through increased congestion.

Any highway or transport infrastructure required to support the development must integrate with the existing infrastructure and be built in a way that enhances the quality of a development and does not place a burden on our resources.

We aim to meet the following specific policy objectives:

- **Road and personal safety:** To achieve developments that:
  - are safe for all users;
  - promote road safety; and
  - reduce personal safety risks (whether real or imagined).
- **Accessibility:** To achieve developments accessible to all vehicles and people, including those with sensory and mobility impairments.
- **Sustainability:** To promote sustainable, high-quality alternatives to the private car and to encourage using sustainable materials wherever possible.
- **The impact on highways and transportation infrastructure:** To make sure the:
  - highways and transportation infrastructure is not adversely affected by developments, including safety and congestion; and
  - impact on people and the environment is minimised.
- **Design quality and future maintenance:** To achieve highway and transportation infrastructure that:
  - contributes to high-quality developments that can be properly and efficiently maintained; and
  - encourages development layouts to be adopted, wherever possible, to safeguard frontager's interests. Whole-life costs should be considered when materials and methods of construction are considered
- **Occupants' and users' satisfaction:** To achieve developments that are appreciated by occupants and users and that meet their likely needs. This will reduce the possibility of future complaints and problems, particularly in residential areas.

We will assess your development proposals against these objectives. Where we consider that your proposals have material implications, we will normally seek to resist your development proposals (for example, by recommending refusal of any planning application).

## **Access to the Network**

In line with an integrated transport policy, we adopt a flexible policy on new connections to the road network. We will severely restrict access to the most important high-standard routes. Elsewhere, particularly in urban locations, in principle we will apply a more flexible approach.

Where access is acceptable to us in principle, we will normally expect its layout to comply with the guidance within this document. We will recommend refusal of any planning application that raises concerns about road safety. Approval for the access (and any associated development) will also depend on the planning authority where planning permission is required.

We will normally apply restrictions on new accesses for vehicles and the increased use of existing accesses on:

- roads with a speed limit above 40 mph or where measured vehicle speeds are in excess of 40mph;
- roads without street lighting;
- routes where the access would affect bus-corridor or bus-priority measures being put in place;
- roads that are at or near capacity (cannot carry more traffic); and
- roads where there is an existing problem with road safety.

If access to a development can be gained off a minor or side road, you should normally consider this option as preferable (with improvements to the junction of the minor side road with the main road as necessary).