

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
C O U N C I L

Highways and
Transportation

Technical Guidance
Note

July 2016

Part 2: Preparing Development Proposals

You can apply the guidance in this document to a wide range of developments, for example, from a single house to a housing estate or from an industrial unit to a business park. The amount of detailed work required for each development proposal will vary depending on its scale and impact on the surrounding highways and transportation infrastructure.

It is important, particularly for larger developments that you do not consider highways and transportation matters separately from other aspects of a development's design. A co-ordinated approach to design is vital to:

- help encourage walking, cycling and public transport;
- regulate vehicle speeds (which may be influenced by how drivers regard their surroundings);
- make sure buildings, streets and spaces are designed to reduce risks to personal safety, particularly to pedestrians, cyclists and public-transport users;
- make sure that the design of buildings and where entrances are placed does not encourage people to park in inappropriate on-street locations;
- provide parking areas that are safe, secure and enjoy good natural observation but that do not dominate the appearance of a development;
- deliver high-quality developments that reflect local character and distinctiveness (planning authorities are unlikely to favour developments that lack quality layout and design); and
- take account of external factors, such as pedestrian and cycle routes, public-transport routes and bus-stop locations, or any proposed road improvements that may influence a development's layout and its access to the road network.

It is important that you approach both us and the planning authority for joint discussions at the earliest opportunity. This approach is strongly recommended in the Manual for Streets. You should also follow the guidance set out in this part of the document so your proposals can be prepared, considered and progressed efficiently. This guidance also tells you what you will normally be required to submit to support your proposals.

We recognise that you may have to carry out more detailed investigations and work at the pre-planning application stage. But where you involve both us and the planning authority early in your planning, agreements can be reached at the pre-application stage. This should reduce the time taken during the planning application, works' technical approval and construction stages.

Our Requirements

We strongly advise you to approach both us (particularly where a development involves creating a new junction or is likely to result in a change in traffic patterns at an existing junction) and the planning authority for initial discussions about whether we can accept your proposals in principle. This should help to avoid work on a proposal that cannot be accepted in principle either on highway or planning grounds and planning permission is likely to be refused.

If your proposal is agreed in principle, you should refer to the relevant parts of this document, including parts 3, 4, and 7 as you develop it. In some cases, we may need additional supporting details. The DfT's Guidance on Transport Assessment provides details regarding types of development we normally need this for and also gives an indication of the minimum additional details we will usually ask you to provide. These thresholds are for guidance purposes only and should not be read as absolutes. We would normally require a concept proposal and outline as part of any pre-application discussion to help inform our requirements for a full planning application.

In certain circumstances we would require more than the minimum information, for example:

- where there are areas of existing traffic congestion;
- where there are areas of existing on-street parking problems;
- any development that is likely to increase accidents or conflicts among drivers and non-drivers, particularly vulnerable road users such as children, people with disabilities and elderly people;
- where there are areas of poor accessibility to public transport or where the local transport infrastructure is inadequate, for example, the roads are substandard the pedestrian and cyclist facilities are poor;
- any development that generates HGVs which impact on 'sensitive' areas, such as residential areas or an area subject to a weight restriction;
- any development generating significant abnormal loads per year;
- any development located within or adjacent to Air Quality Management Areas
- any development in other 'sensitive' areas, such as where development traffic may affect a school or where there are significant numbers of vulnerable people.
- any development that does not conform with the adopted development plan; and
- any development which proposes 100 or more parking spaces.

If you are unsure or need advice about the additional supporting information we might require, please contact us (see Appendix A). If a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment is required for a proposal then you should scope the requirements with the Highway Authority before undertaking.

Preparing your development proposal

The guidance in this section gives advice on how you should prepare your initial development proposals. Once you have done this, you can be confident that the basic principles have been properly established. (Guidance on preparing more detailed proposals is given in Section 4).

You can follow the guidance in this section as good practice for preparing all development proposals, but it will apply mainly where we require you to submit additional details in support of your proposals.

Basic Information

Before preparing the development proposal, it is important to establish certain basic information that could influence the design. This includes assessing conditions and facilities surrounding the site. Examples of matters you should consider include:

- if the site is well located in terms of existing or planned pedestrian and cycle routes and how far the walking and cycling distances are from such routes;
- the existing standard of the surrounding road network;
- the extent of publicly-maintained highway around the site;
- if there are any proposals to improve the highway that will affect the site;
- the existing traffic situation and any congestion, accident or parking problems;
- if the surrounding road network is subject to either an existing or proposed HGV restriction as part of any lorry control plans;
- any public footpaths or any other public rights of way such as bridleways, which may be affected by the development;
- any other existing rights to or across the site such as a private access, which may need to be included in the development;
- how well the site is served by an accessible and frequent public-transport service offering a choice of destinations, the location of and routes to any bus stops and any facilities such as shelters;
- if the site is located on a route where there are planned bus-corridor improvements;
- if the site is located in an air quality management area (see Appendix H); and
- for new **residential** developments in particular:
 - how near shops, community or leisure centres, employment areas and so on are located (the Manual for Streets sets out

that 'walkable' neighbourhoods typically have a range of everyday facilities within 10 minutes walking time – up to 800m);

- the standard of the routes between the development and these facilities, particularly for walking and cycling and how far the walking and cycling distances are from the facilities;
- the schools children are likely to attend;
- the standard of routes to the schools, particularly for walking and cycling;
- any 'safe routes to school' proposals; and
- are the schools able to accommodate more children, for example, what is the existing traffic and parking situation and is there enough classroom capacity.

Establishing Key Design Factors

Having collected the necessary basic information, it is then important to establish key design factors. These are likely to help shape the development's general layout and affect its impact on highways and transportation infrastructure. Such factors include the following.

- Where will the access to the site be located and what type of access is required, for example, priority (give way) junction, roundabout or traffic signals?
- What are the likely main destinations for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists travelling from or to the site, where are they likely to have come from and what routes are available to them?
- For new residential developments, how safe, direct high-quality routes can best be provided to:
 - nearby shops, community or leisure centres, employment areas and so on, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and people travelling by bus if any facilities like these proposed on the site; and
 - nearby schools, particularly for walking and cycling. Is a new school proposed on the site?
- Will a new bus service be needed to run through the site, or will existing services running past it need improving?
- How much off-street parking will be needed for a development of this type and in this location?
- For residential developments in particular:
 - what type of parking is proposed, for example, if each property will have its own parking area or if car-parking spaces are to be grouped together to serve several adjacent properties, or if separate, remote parking courts are proposed; and
 - does the layout of the buildings and the roads reflect local character and create a sense of place?
- For employment developments what use class is proposed? (We will recommend planning conditions to ensure that any assumptions made at this stage are correct when the development is eventually built.)
- Ground contamination and how it will be dealt with.

You should discuss these initial stages of work jointly with us and the planning authority before proceeding further. We will work with the other parties involved to identify and seek agreement on issues, constraints and requirements relating to the site, including those related to highways and transportation, planning and any issues that you might raise. It is at this stage that it will be decided whether a transport assessment is required and, if so, which type and with what requirements.

Concept Proposal and Outline

Following joint discussions with us and the planning authority, you should then prepare, if needed, a site concept proposal / pre application submission for consideration along with any required transport assessment and draft travel plan. The purpose of a concept proposal / pre application submission is to bring together all highways and transportation, planning and any other relevant matters to demonstrate how you propose to deliver a safe, accessible and maintainable high-quality development.

In general, the concept proposal should normally consist of one or more plans along with any supporting information. It should fit together clearly, consistently and logically with any transport assessment and draft travel plan. Any assumptions you make in one document must be reflected in the others. For example, it will not be acceptable for a transport assessment simply to state that occupiers will make a large number of cycle trips without:

- the concept proposal demonstrating how good, safe, cycle access and facilities will be provided in practice; and
- the draft travel plan setting out supporting measures and incentives to encourage cycling

When you prepare the concept proposal and outline, you should refer to the relevant design guidance set out in this document. You should also include 'designing out crime' issues and, where appropriate, meet jointly with us, the Liaison Officer from the police force and the planning authority.

The specific content of the concept proposal will depend on whether your development proposals are explicitly covered by this design guidance; and whether you are intending to submit an outline or detailed planning application for your development. Table 1 shows what would normally be required for an outline or detailed application.

Requirement for concept proposal	Outline	Detailed
General location and layout of buildings	X	X
Proposed on-site community facilities	X	X
Site accesses and routes through the site, and the role they are expected to play – main movements of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, buses, cars	X	X
Basic Junction Forms	X	X
How any existing public or private rights of way will be accommodated	X	X
Parking arrangements – on and off street		X
Public Transport routes, facilities and pedestrian routes to them	X	X
How the adoptable highway will be defined		X
Details of materials for areas intended for adoption along with clear proposals for long term maintenance		X
Details of materials for public areas not for adoption, including long term maintenance responsibilities		X
How and where utility equipment will be accommodated, confirmation that this is acceptable to utility companies and adoption of drainage		X
Pedestrian, cycle, public transport and other routes for vehicles linking the site to any surrounding developments, and a preliminary indication of any works required to achieve or improve these routes		X
The location of any school on the site, the safety of pedestrians and cyclists linking to it and measures to stop parents driving children to school	X	X
Any other planning requirements	X	X

For developments that are not explicitly covered by this design guidance – including new or innovative layouts or proposals including Home Zones, in addition to the above requirements for the concept proposal, the following will also be needed:

Additional requirements for concept proposal	Outline	Detailed
Examples, if available, of where similar design concepts, features and so on have been successfully used and adopted by a Highway Authority	X	X
A design statement for the layout, including justifications of assumed speeds and visibility splays.		X
A stage 1 safety audit (stage 2, 3 and 4 as progress)		X
Tracking assessments of appropriate vehicles, identifying and taking account of likely on street parking		X
More comprehensive details of proposed street furniture, details of signing and preliminary street light locations		X
A disability audit		X
Details of how bin stores and collection will be dealt with		X
Confirmation from all emergency services that the layout is acceptable to them		X

This additional information will help us to consider the development proposals and should help to minimise any problems and delays at later stages.

Agreement in Principle

After you have prepared the concept proposal and any necessary supporting information, you should hold further joint discussions with us and the planning authorities before submitting a planning application. This is to reach agreement in principle on:

- the site layout, including access;
- areas likely to be adopted as publicly maintained and those areas to be private;
- any off-site works;
- any financial contributions from you; and
- any travel plan.

We will take a positive approach to these discussions and work with all parties involved with the proposed development to overcome any problems. However, we will resist development proposals that conflict with our policies and objectives set out in this document and also meet any other policies and objectives of the relevant highway authority.

However, assuming that we reach agreement in principle, you should then be in a position to submit a planning application along with all necessary supporting details.