

# Highway authority engagement on local plan making

Guidance for local planning  
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## Purpose

This guidance aims to assist the local planning authority (LPA) in its preparation of the local plan, supporting vision-led transport planning in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Hampshire Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4). It sets out clear guidance for engagement with Hampshire County Council in its capacity as the local highway authority (LHA), to ensure development is sustainable, well connected, and aligned with long term countywide objectives.

It provides the County Council's advice on vision setting, helping LPAs take an integrated, evidence-based approach during the early stages of local plan preparation. By embedding transport considerations from the outset, LPAs can shape places that prioritise accessibility by active travel and public transport as part of a vision-led approach to local plan making.

### **The purpose of this guidance is to:**

- Ensure early and effective engagement with the LHA.
- Promote vision-led transport planning through reference to LTP4.
- Set out expectations for transport modelling, assessment, and mitigation strategies to inform robust and deliverable local plans.

## Vision-led planning

A vision-led approach allows local planning authorities to collaboratively define a transport vision, which should guide and direct the development of the local plan and influence growth patterns to support sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) strengthens national expectations around vision-led transport planning and provides clearer direction on how local plans should integrate transport at the earliest stages. The County Council's approach set out in this guidance aligns with these proposed changes.

It is recommended that the transport vision and objectives for a local plan are developed at the earliest stage possible, ideally prior to site identification and before any transport modelling is undertaken. An example of this is set out below.

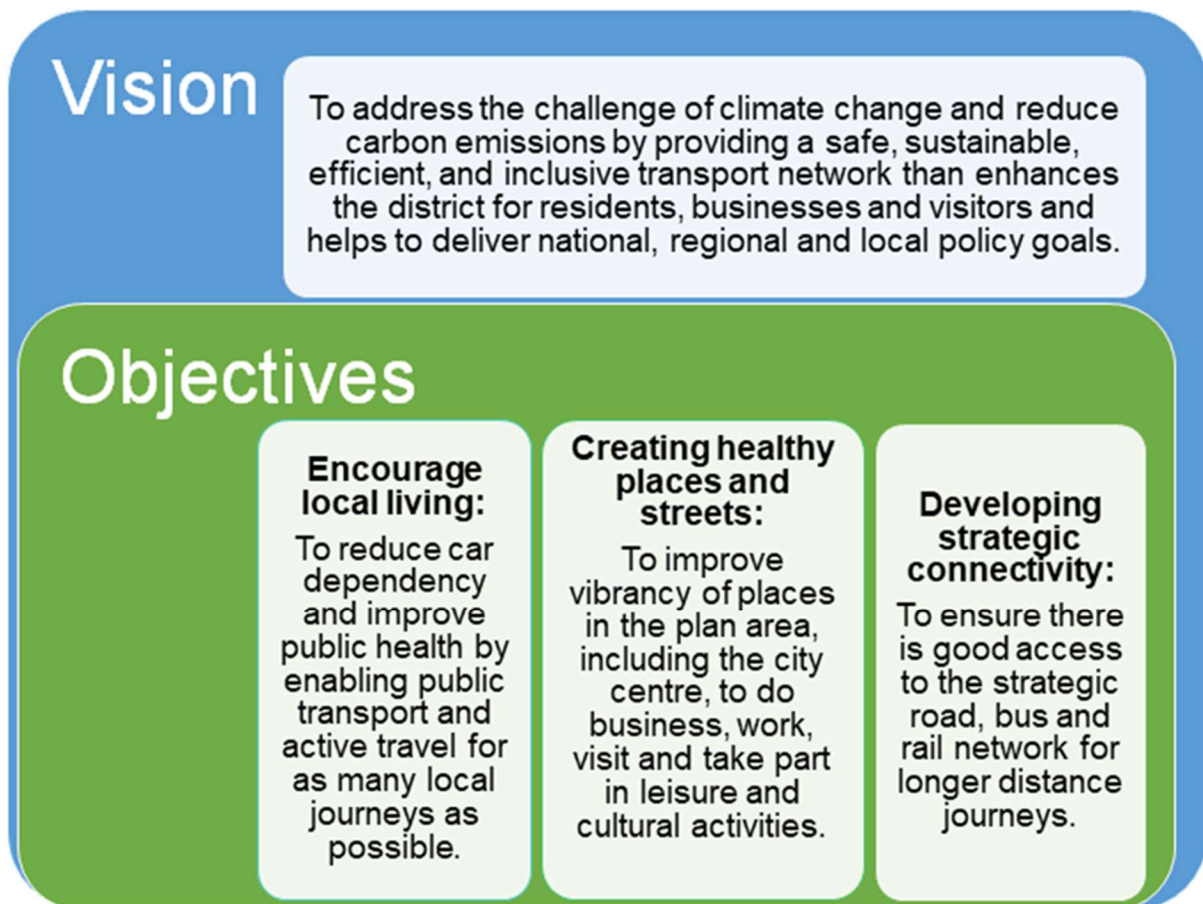


Figure 1: Example vision and objectives for a local plan

## Local Policy Context

This guidance has been produced following the adoption of [Local Transport Plan 4 \(LTP4\)](#) to support LPAs to reflect this policy within local plans, and to reflect national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024). LTP4 has two guiding principles:

- Principle 1: Give people a choice of high-quality travel options.
- Principle 2: Provide a transport system that promotes high-quality, prosperous places and puts people first.

These principles aim to provide people with high quality travel choices such as walking, cycling, and public transport, while designing transport systems that prioritise people and places over vehicles, creating more connected, liveable, and accessible communities.

## Early Engagement

As the local highway authority for the Hampshire area, the County Council welcome engagement at the earliest stages of plan making. The County Council will provide direction and critical review as the local plan progresses in consultation with the LPA.

## Evidence base

Details for the policy and strategic context, and transport baseline chapters can be supported by the County Council's existing evidence base which includes:

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – particularly the Healthy Places section which covers several transport metrics.
- Area strategies, where applicable.
- Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- Station Interchange Improvement Plan.
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.
- Details of our capital programme and future schemes.

A summary of existing policies is not required, however the County Council would recommend a section outlining how the policies will be applied within the transport assessment methodology and connectivity/mitigation package.

## Policy setting

Local plans should set transport policies that prioritise sustainable travel, reduce car dependency and integrate transport and spatial planning from the outset. Policies should reference LTP4 and its Movement and Place Framework to shape street functions, ensure developments support walking and cycling, and improve connectivity to public transport.

Healthy Streets principles should be embedded in both strategic and site-specific policies to secure high-quality, safe and accessible environments for all users,

Local plans should also use the Road User Utility Framework (RUUF) to prioritise efficient and sustainable modes, requiring applicants to demonstrate how proposals minimise car use, support public transport and reduces road danger. Site allocations and development management policies should secure direct active travel links, integrate with local Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and bus networks, and ensure transport assessments and travel plans are aligned with LTP4 objectives.

Local plan policies should also actively use parking strategies, plans and pricing to lock in sustainable travel behaviours (e.g. low car developments, provision of Electric Vehicle charging points and parking spaces for car club vehicles, and good quality cycle parking).

# Modelling

The County Council recognises that strategic modelling tools must evolve to support a vision-led approach. Consequently, whilst LPAs should use Hampshire's strategic models (Sub-Regional Transport Model and North Hampshire Transport Model) for scenario testing, these models alone are not sufficient to demonstrate policy compliant outcomes. Accordingly, alternative and complementary assessments will also be required to ensure that mitigation strategies prioritise trip reduction and modal shift toward active travel and public transport, rather than relying on a traditional highway capacity-led response.

At least one 'baseline', one 'do minimum' (with local plan allocations), and one 'do something' (with local plan allocations and mitigation) scenarios should be tested. Within the 'do something scenario', in addition to 'traditional' modelling of highway capacity enhancements, it will be necessary to evaluate how mitigation policies aligning with national policy and LTP4 objectives will influence travel choices and meet the objectives of the vision.

Some exceptions for the use of strategic models include;

- Where the quantum of development is very low (i.e. within the national parks) spreadsheet modelling may be supported.
- Where a LPA is covered by two models, and most of the development is covered by one model, different approaches may be considered across the two areas.
- Where a transport consultant proposes an innovative modelling approach that can better assess the vision and is compatible with national Transport Appraisal Guidance (sometimes referred to as being TAG compliant).

## ***Preparing for a model run***

Before starting modelling work, it is advised that LPAs engage with the County Council to:

- Agree the baseline land uses to be modelled.
- Agree how background growth will be applied outside of the local plan area.
- Check all the model zones to agree the loading points (even if the exact locations of site accesses are not known).
- Confirm that the committed schemes in the model baseline are still up to date.
- Confirm that public transport routes in the model remain in service.

## ***Assessing modelling outputs***

The County Council is keen to work collaboratively with LPAs to inform site selection based on connectivity, and opportunities for connectivity by walking, cycling, wheeling and public transport. It will also support with identifying appropriate measures that mitigate the impact of development and/or improve connectivity, delivering the vision

of both LTP4 and the local plan. Highway capacity improvements may be suitable in limited locations, but the overall approach should follow LTP4's Road User Utility Framework.

## **Mitigation**

Following the shift to a vision-led approach, the County Council recommend that mitigation is guided by model outputs but not constrained by them. This means that the focus should be on identifying realistic alternatives to increasing road capacity wherever possible.

The following types of mitigation approached should be considered when assessing the transport impacts of development:

1. Supporting measures that reduce or remove the need to travel in the first place.
2. Active travel and public transport improvements.
3. Demand management (e.g., car clubs, parking standards).
4. Highway capacity only where considered essential (on safety grounds or where impacts are considered severe in all reasonable tested scenarios and cannot be solved through the measures above).

## **Getting in touch**

If you have any questions on this guidance, please contact us at [transportpolicy@hants.gov.uk](mailto:transportpolicy@hants.gov.uk).