

Road Network Policy

Part 1.2

1.2.1 Principles of access to the highway network

In order to facilitate new development, the County Council supports the need for limited improvements to 'A' and 'B' class roads, whether; to improve or extend existing capacity, to provide new links, or to address clearly identified significant strategic or local needs. In assessing proposals that would increase traffic, and/or provide new streets and junctions, the following criteria should be considered:

- the contribution to sustainable development and regeneration including improved connectivity;
- how conditions for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, freight and local residents can be improved;
- how safety for all is improved;
- the extent of any additional traffic and any effects it may have on the locality, and the extent to which congestion can be reduced; and
- how a net benefit to the environment can be provided.

1.2.2 Proposals should show, overall, a net benefit across these criteria when taken as a whole. All proposals must show how any dis-benefits will be mitigated.

1.2.3 New accesses for vehicles and the increased use of existing accesses on other classified and unclassified roads will normally be supported where:

- the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, freight and local residents can be addressed;
- there is not a road safety problem or where a road safety problem can be removed; and
- the route is suitable or can be suitably upgraded to carry the additional traffic and type of traffic from the development.

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

1.2.5 Need for Transport Assessments, Transport Statements, and Travel Plans

The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) covers the current national policy for promoting sustainable transport.

NPPF states that:

“Planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities”.

1.2.6 The preparation of a Transport Assessment in support of a proposed development is identified as a key document in encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport. The NPPF goes on to say:

“All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed and monitored” ;

1.2.7 Government guidance on the preparation of Transport Assessments, Transport Statements, and Travel Plans is provided in Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) ‘Transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking’. The PPG states that

“Where the transport impacts of development are not significant, it may be that no Transport Assessment or Statement or Travel Plan is required. Local planning authorities, developers, relevant transport authorities, and neighbourhood planning organisations should agree what evaluation is needed in each instance”.

1.2.8 The ‘Guidance on Transport Assessment’ (GTA) (DfT, March 2007) was archived in October 2014. However, in lieu of any detailed replacement guidance being published, the County Council requires Transport Assessments and Statements to be prepared in accordance with the PPG and GTA, particularly where significant changes in traffic may occur.

1.2.9 In general, the County Council will seek a Transport Statement or a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan based on the following thresholds. These equate to development scenarios which would typically generate greater than 30 two-way peak hour vehicle trips. This threshold will also be used to establish the scope of the assessment in terms of main junctions to be included. However, there may be specific circumstances where the threshold requires adjustment both upwards and downwards. The scope of a Transport Assessment should therefore be agreed at an early stage. Lorry movements should be converted to Passenger Car Units (PCU) if likely to be material.

1.2.10 Where a proposed development meets the below thresholds but a change of use or change in access arrangements would not represent a material change in the level of traffic generation, the submission of a Technical Note may be sufficient in support of a planning application.

Table 1.2

Land use	Use/description of development	No assessment	Transport Statement	Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
Food retail	Retail sale of food goods to the public – food superstores, supermarkets, convenience food stores.	<250sq.m	>250<800sq.m	>800sq.m

Land use	Use/description of development	No assessment	Transport Statement	Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
Non-food retail	Retail sale of non-food goods to the public; but includes sandwich bars – sandwiches or other cold food purchased and consumed off the premises, internet cafés.	<800sq.m	>800<1,500sq.m	>1,500sq.m
Dwelling houses	Dwellings for individuals, families of up to six people living together as a single household and receiving care e.g. supported housing schemes such as those for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems	<50 units	>50<80 units	>80 units
Business	(a) Offices other than in use within Class A2 (financial and professional services) (b) research and development – laboratories, studios (c) light industry	<1,500sq.m	>1,500<2,500sq.m	>2,500sq.m
General industrial	General industry (other than classified as in B1).The former 'special industrial' use classes, B3 – B7, are now all encompassed in the B2 use class.	<2,500sq.m	>2,500<4,000sq.m	>4,000sq.m
Storage or distribution	Storage or distribution centres – wholesale warehouses, distribution centres and repositories.	<3,000sq.m	>3,000< 5,000sq.m	>5,000sq.m
Mixed Development/Sui Generis	Sui generis - For example: petrol filling stations, vehicle hire, vehicle sales, builders' yard, garden centre, scrap yard, waste disposal.	Discuss with highway authority		

Land use	Use/description of development	No assessment	Transport Statement	Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
Financial and professional services	Financial services – banks, building societies and bureaux de change, professional services (other than health or medical services) – estate agents and employment agencies, other services – betting shops, principally where services are provided to visiting members of the public.	<1,000sq.m	>1,000<2,500sq.m	>2,500sq.m
Restaurants and cafes	Restaurants and cafés – use for the sale of food for consumption on the premises, including internet cafés.	<300sq.m	>300<2,500sq.m	>2,500sq.m
Drinking establishments	Use as a public house, wine-bar or other drinking establishment.	<300sq.m	>300<600sq.m	>600sq.m
Hot food takeaways	Use for the sale of hot food for consumption on or off the premises.	<250sq.m	>250<500sq.m	>500sq.m
Drive-thru restaurants and coffee shops	Use for the sale of food and drink for collection in a vehicle and consumption off the premises			In all cases
Hotels	Hotels, boarding houses and guest houses, development falls within this class if 'no significant element of care is provided'.	<75 bedrooms	>75<100 bedrooms	>100 bedrooms

Land use	Use/description of development	No assessment	Transport Statement	Transport Assessment and Travel Plan
Residential institutions- hospitals, nursing homes	Used for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care.	<30 beds	>30<50beds	>50 beds
Residential institutions - residential education	Boarding schools and training centres.	<50 students	>50<150 students	>150students
Residential institutions - hostels	Homeless shelters, accommodation for people with learning difficulties and people on probation.	<250 residents	>250<400 residents	>400 residents
Non-residential institution	Medical and health services – clinics and health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, consulting rooms (not attached to the consultant's or doctor's house), museums, public libraries, art galleries, exhibition halls, training centres, places of worship, religious instruction and church halls.	<500sq.m	>500<1,000sq.m	>1,000sq.m
Schools	Primary and secondary schools with or without a nursery.	See Part 4.3 New Schools & School Extensions		
Assembly and leisure	Cinemas, dance and concert halls, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums, bingo halls and casinos, other indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses not involving motorised vehicles or firearms.	<500sq.m	>500sq.m<1,500sq.m	>1,500sq.m

1.2.11 Highway Adoption

We will encourage developers to create residential street layouts that are to an adoptable standard and that will be offered for adoption to protect residents' interests. We will not normally adopt access to developments of five or less dwellings. We will discourage the use of private streets serving in excess of five dwellings, and will consider whether the use of the Advanced Payment Code, Highways Act 1980 is appropriate to secure adoption in each case. In exceptional circumstances we may consider private streets serving more than five dwellings subject to the County Council being indemnified from the cost of making-up streets and private maintenance arrangements being put in place.

1.2.12 For employment and commercial developments, we will not normally seek to adopt road layouts purely of an industrial or commercial nature unless a through route with wider strategic transport benefits.

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