

West Berkshire Local Plan Review 2023-2041 (adopted June 2025)

Transport

Policy SP19

Transport

Development that generates a transport impact will be required to:

- Minimise the impact of all forms of travel on the environment, in accordance with West Berkshire's declared Climate Emergency and Environment Strategy;
- Improve and promote opportunities for active travel;
- Improve travel choice and facilitate sustainable travel particularly within, between and to main urban areas and rural service centres;
- Demonstrate good access to key services and facilities;
- Mitigate any adverse impact on local transport networks and the strategic road network; and
- Have regard to the West Berkshire Freight Route Network and availability of lorry parking where development will need the support of these facilities.

Non-residential developments will be required to prepare Transport Assessments or Transport Statements as appropriate in support of the proposed development. The judgement regarding the need for such documents lies with the Council and will be guided by indicative thresholds for various uses.

For residential development, a full Transport Assessment will be required where 60 or more dwellings are proposed. Where 30 or more dwellings are proposed, a Transport Statement will be required. Where appropriate, any development below 60 dwellings may be requested to produce a full Transport Assessment. Development proposals should follow the advice set out in the Council's 'Highway Design Guidance for Residential Developments'.

Travel Plans and the implementation of associated measures will be required for all developments which generate a significant amount of transport movement and in accordance with policy DM45 relating to travel planning measures.

Supporting Text

7.37 The provision of a sustainable transport network to serve the communities of West Berkshire is essential for improving accessibility, enhancing economic vitality, protecting the environment and promoting quality of life. The policy therefore seeks to encourage sustainable travel in order to achieve these goals and to minimise the impact on local transport networks and the strategic road network.

7.38 Central to this policy is the recognition of the part that transport needs to play in adapting to help achieve the local Climate Emergency target of carbon neutrality by 2030. The development of new ideas and technologies in relation to reducing the environmental harm caused by our travel activities is moving at pace. It is essential that new development in the District adopts the latest standards and practices in reducing carbon in order that transport and travel is leading the way in West Berkshire in tackling climate change and minimising harm to our environment.

7.39 Improving and promoting opportunities for active travel should be considered for all development and be carried out in a way that recognises safety as a key consideration. Particular focus should be given to the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and other vulnerable road users. These active travel modes benefit people's health and are promoted through the Local Transport Plan⁽⁹⁸⁾ and supporting Active Travel Strategy⁽⁹⁹⁾, and the Environment Strategy⁽¹⁰⁰⁾.

98 Local Transport Plan: <https://westberks.gov.uk/ltp>

99 Active Travel Strategy: <https://westberks.gov.uk/ltp>

100 Environment Strategy: <https://westberks.gov.uk/environmentstrategy>

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7.40 Improving travel choice is a key way of working towards a modal shift away from single occupancy car use in favour of more sustainable travel (walking, cycling, bus and rail travel, car sharing, car clubs). Improving sustainable travel choice within and between the main urban areas and rural service centres of West Berkshire and key destinations in neighbouring authorities will help to facilitate regular journeys for example to work and education. All development will be required to show how it improves travel choice and reduces the use of single occupancy cars.

7.41 The Council's desire to plan for people to live in places where there are local facilities and services, whether these are fixed or mobile will support the ambition to reduce the need to travel which is one of the best ways of reducing the impact on the environment or stress on local transport networks. The changing nature of technology and how this facilitates working from home and access to services through the world wide web also contributes to this.

7.42 The nature of West Berkshire poses a significant challenge for accessibility to key services and facilities. Residential development should seek to demonstrate good accessibility by:

- Locating where there is already good access to key services and facilities;
- Contributing towards improving connections between communities and key services and facilities;
- Having or developing good technology infrastructure.

7.43 The Council is responsible for the local highway, cycle and walking, and Public Right of Way networks as well as supporting public transport networks. National Highways is responsible for the strategic road network (SRN) which, in West Berkshire, comprises the M4 and the A34. All development proposals will be required to demonstrate that they do not adversely affect these networks or that they can mitigate the adverse impact. Where a Transport Assessment for a significant development illustrates that there will be an impact on the capacity of the SRN or local networks, the developer will need to undertake detailed traffic modelling in accordance with national guidance. Developers will need to work with the Council and National Highways to establish a suitable mitigation package.

7.44 The Council has established a preferred Freight Route Network (FRN) for West Berkshire which identifies a hierarchy of routes that should be used for freight movements to, through and within the District. Development which results in freight movements, including construction traffic should take into consideration the FRN. Developments that have associated travel activity that is likely to require the use of local lorry parking facilities should have regard to the capacity of these facilities in support of their proposed development.

7.45 Transport Assessments / Statements and Travel Plans are vital to support planning proposals so that the impact of the proposed development can be assessed and mitigated. All developments which are judged to generate significant transport movement will be required to provide a suitable level of assessment. Development that encourages modal shift of goods and people to more sustainable forms of transport will be supported.

7.46 Details around requirements for parking provision (relating to cycle, motorcycle and car parking) are dealt within policy DM44, and details for travel planning measures in policy DM45.