Guidance on preparing a Travel Plan for mixed-use developments

For developments that contain a mix of land uses (e.g. residential, workplace, school, leisure uses etc.), Swindon Borough Council requires a Framework Travel Plan to be submitted as part of the planning application, in line with local and national policy.

A Framework Travel Plan is the document submitted when the occupiers of the development are unknown, and may be required as a result of a transport assessment or statement, to minimise the impact of the development on the road network, but also contributes to a sustainable development as the other benefits of travel planning are also realised.

The purpose of a FTP is to bring together each individual Travel Plan into one overall document which acts as the key monitoring document at a site-wide level. All occupiers within the area are likely to have common issues and concerns relating to transport to and from the site. As such, developing an FTP will allow any area-wide issues to be raised with the relevant body and ultimately provide more influence overall. It also reduces the need for repetitive work across several organisations, strengthens the branding/promotion of sustainable travel across the site, whilst allowing the site as a whole to take advantage of any economies of scale.

What to include in a Framework Travel Plan

The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (March 2008) demonstrates what it considers to be best practice when creating and promoting a Travel Plan. The features consist of the following:

• Travel Plan coordinator

• Travel Plan document

• Concrete measures

• SMART targets (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound)

• Committed resources

• Baseline data

• Monitoring mechanism

Travel Plans vary from site to site; however they should contain a number of key elements which will explain details such as the site's accessibility, travel plan measures, targets and monitoring regimes. A checklist is provided in appendix 1 to ensure that all of the requirements of the Framework Travel Plan are met prior to submission. An outline of the contents of each element of the Travel Plan is set out below.

Development Details

The planning application number/reference is required for continuity, along with full details of the size and type of the development, including details of any operational activities, opening hours, known staffing numbers and the number of proposed and/or existing parking spaces.

The document should provide as much detail as is possible to provide the reader with a clear idea of what the development entails. It should also be apparent what is within the scope of the Travel Plan, for example, does it cover residents, visitors, deliveries, customers etc.

Baseline Sustainability Audit

It is important that an appreciation of the site location is presented in the document; in particular access to the site by all modes should be identified. When carrying out a site audit, consideration should be given to public transport, walking, cycling and private motor vehicle in accessing the site.

Objectives

Clear objectives should be identified within the document; these could be high level statements which identify key areas to be targeted. For example, to reduce single occupancy car use to the site. Objectives provide a direction through which targets can be created to measure whether progress is being made.

Travel Plan Measures

Details should be provided of the Travel Plan measures which are either proposed or have been implemented. The details of the measures should be clearly set out and include committal language. Phrases such as "could", "may" and "should" need to be avoided as this forms no commitment to carrying out the measures listed and would not be enforceable. It is however worthwhile to provide ideas or aspirations but these should be in addition to firm measures rather than a substitute for them.

Travel Plan Coordinator

It is essential that a Travel Plan Coordinator is appointed to operate the day-to-day running of the Framework Travel Plan responsibilities. It is particularly important that this person is appointed a an early stage in order to influence the design and layout of the development or as a minimum they should be appointed prior to the occupation of the site as they will be able to have a direct influence from the first day that the site is occupied.

The role of the Travel Plan Coordinator includes:

- Promotion and marketing of the Travel Plan and the Travel Plan measures including access by all modes of transport;

- Liaising with occupiers and supporting them in implementing their own Travel Plans;

- Liaising with bus operators and other stakeholders

- Liaison with SBC in implementing the Travel Plan; and

- Submitting annual monitoring reports to SBC.

The details of the Travel Plan Coordinator including an address, telephone number and email address should be provided in the document. In the case that a Travel Plan Coordinator has not yet been appointed, there should be a commitment within the document to supply the details to SBC. The authors of the Framework Travel Plan (usually a consultancy) will be held responsible as travel plan coordinators until such a time as an appointment is made.

Targets and outcomes

It is imperative that numerical targets and/or outcomes are included within the Travel Plan document as this provides a mechanism to measure the effectiveness of the Travel Plan measures against the objectives identified within the plan.

Targets are usually based upon trip generation and reducing the share of the single occupancy vehicle against baseline figures collected as part of the initial travel survey. It is recognised that in the case of proposed developments it will not be possible to undertake baseline travel surveys at this stage. However, there are a number of alternatives which can be used to gauge likely modal share in the interim e.g. using TRICs modal share data, travel to work census data and, if part of a wider development, by making use of existing data sets which may exist for already occupied units.

It is important that targets are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic and Time bound). Therefore targets need to be based on making a difference to existing modal shares which can feasibly be achieved. It is recommended that targets have a timeframe for completion of between 3-5 years in the short term and 10-15 for longer term developments, in order to allow sufficient time for the Travel Plan to achieve a positive change.

Government research states that basic travel plans can expect to achieve a 6-10% reduction in car use whilst travel plans with parking management can achieve reductions of up to 20-25%. This should be considered when developing numerical targets which are both realistic and challenging.

Further outcomes may aim to reduce trip length or other requirements specific to the development site.

Baseline Travel Survey

As mentioned above, it is important that a baseline travel survey is undertaken in order to provide a justification for the numerical targets outlined within the Travel Plan It is recognised that in the case of proposed developments it will not be possible to undertake baseline travel surveys at this stage. However, there are a number of alternatives which can be used to gauge likely modal share in the interim e.g. using TRICs modal share data, travel to work census data and, if part of a wider development, by making use of existing data sets which may exist for already occupied units.

The Framework Travel Plan will have to state a commitment to undertake surveys within 3-6 months of occupation.

Monitoring Strategy

In order to establish the effectiveness of the Travel Plan a monitoring regime needs to be outlined within the Framework Travel Plan document. Monitoring should be undertaken on at least an annual basis and a commitment to undertaking this should be stated within the document. Annual monitoring should be undertaken for a minimum of 10 years. Monitoring can take the form of staff travel surveys, automated traffic counts (ATCs), cordon survey, household sampling, rider counts, voucher/incentive uptake etc

Review

Review of the Framework Travel Plan should take place annually after monitoring is complete. The purpose of the review is to remove unsuccessful incentives and alter their focus/replace them with measures that will achieve the Travel Plan targets.

Remedial Strategy

In the event that the Travel Plan is shown to be underachieving a remedial strategy needs to be outlined, this should consider measures which could help to get the Travel Plan "back on track".

This may mean an additional expense to the developer as a commitment to making the Travel Plan a success. For example in the event that the Travel Plan targets are not being met, public transport taster tickets, more intensified personalised marketing or parking restrictions could be provided to encourage use of the sustainable transport.

Funding Sources

It is important that the Travel Plan is transparent and therefore the proposed funding sources of the Travel Plan and its measures should be clearly outlined. In particular consideration should be given to the cost of funding the Travel Plan Coordinator in addition to the measures and monitoring.

Action Plan

The Action Plan is table of actions and initiatives that pulls together the issues which have been identified. It details the intentions of the travel plan and how change is to be implemented.

The action plan needs to be incorporated into the Travel Plan document, and should outline who is responsible for implementing each task, and a deadline for completion. It may also be useful to attribute any costs to the individual tasks within the table to ensure transparency.

In order to ensure the effective outcome of travel plans, remedial measures should also be outlined within the travel plan document. These will describe what actions will be undertaken should the travel plan not meet its targets.

Securing the Travel Plan

In order to ensure that the Travel Plan is successfully implemented, it is necessary to legally secure the travel plan. All travel plans which are prepared through the

planning process will be secured by a Section 106 agreement. As the Section 106 will need to be secured at the outline application stage, the measures set out in the Travel Plan should be costed and agreed with Swindon Borough Council through discussions.   It will also, in the case of either speculative or multi occupant development, include provision for some form of covenant, to be contained within any lease agreement(s), to 'tie-in' subsequent tenants.

Appendix 1 - Checklist

As a guide, the Framework Travel Plan should include information under the suggested following headings:

Introduction (to include context, a breakdown of all the land uses, the quantum of development of each land use, the timetabling of development and travel planning channel for each; e.g. residential, school, employment, leisure...) **–** also include Travel Plan requirements (How is the overall travel planning going to be managed?)

Travel Plan Principals (Policy context, benefits of the travel plan to the site, guidance used and the role of the framework document)

Travel Planning Management (Description of each travel plan channel mentioned in the introduction, with details of the document to be produced, scope, audience and purpose, a timeframe and responsibility for its production and implementation). Please note that for residential travel plans and workplace travel plans, we require the full travel plans to be produced using Modeshift Starsfor. For school travel plans, we require the use of Modeshift Stars. Guidance on preparing these travel plans can be found at http://www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk/business/travel-plans-guidance/

Existing and Future Accessibility of the site (Site location, distances from key destinations, existing local bus / rail routes / cycle routes and networks, future proposed bus / rail routes / cycle routes and networks, including a public transport strategy outlining demand, routing and timetabling, car sharing and car club)

Global aims, objectives and targets (Both "action" and "aim" targets, time scaled, with targets and indicators)

Travel plan implementation strategy (roles, responsibilities and resources, partnership arrangements, branding and marketing, next steps)

Site wide measures (Infrastructure measures and designs for sustainable transport that will be universal across the development. Promotional and marketing measures across the site. Failsafe measures for not hitting targets)

Monitoring and review (monitoring schedule and mechanism)

Further information and contacts

Appendices (as appropriate)

APPENDIX 2 - Contact Information

For further information and advice on travel plans contact:

Claire Fleming
Travel Plan Officer
Swindon Borough Council
Wat Tyler House
Beckhampton Street
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN1 2JH

Tel: 01793 466392

Email: cfleming@swindon.gov.uk
See other guidance online at
http://www.swindontravelchoices.co.uk/business/travel-plans-guidance/

For further information on Swindon Borough Council's guidance document
"Parking Standards for developers" can be found at
https://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/documents/s16374/Parking%20Standards%20App1.pdf or contact:

Transport Development Management Team
Swindon Borough Council
Wat Tyler House
Beckhampton Street
Swindon
Wiltshire
SN1 2JH

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