Transport Statements/ Assessments

A Transport Statement or Assessment should set out the transport issues relating to a proposed development site and details of the development proposals.

The following information breaks down what the Highway Authority would expect to see as a part of these documents. There is also a scoping opinion at the end to ensure developers and agents are aware of the key requirements.

Existing Conditions

The developer should provide a full description of:

- existing site information – describing the current physical infrastructure and characteristics of the site and its surroundings.
- baseline transport data – background transport data and current transport infrastructure details.

This information should be accurately established to understand the context of the development proposal. The description should include as a minimum:

Existing site information

- a site location plan that shows the proposed development site in relation to the surrounding area and transport system,
- the permitted and existing use of the site,
- the existing land uses in the vicinity of the site, including development plan allocations, or potential future use in the case of undeveloped sites,
- existing site access arrangements including access constraints, where appropriate,
- whether the location of the site is within or near a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA),
- any abnormal load uses of the current site.

Baseline transport data

- a qualitative description of the travel characteristics of the existing site, including pedestrian and cyclist movements and facilities, where applicable,
- existing public transport provision, including provision/frequency of services, location of bus stops/train stations, park-and-ride facilities,

- a description and functional classification of the highway network in the vicinity of the Site,
- an analysis of the injury accident records on the public highway in the vicinity of the site access for the most recent three-year period, or five-year period if the proposed site has been identified as within a high accident area.

Proposed Development

The developer should provide a full description within the TS including, as a minimum:

- plans and drawings showing the proposed site layout, particularly the proposed pedestrian and vehicular access points into the site,
- the proposed land use,
- the scale of development, such as numbers of residential units and/or gross floor area (GFA), subdivided by land use where appropriate,
- the main features (design layout and access points) of the development,
- the person-trip generation of the proposed development and distribution of trips across Mode,
- a qualitative and quantitative description (based on recent site observations) of the travel characteristics of the proposed development, including pedestrian and cyclist facilities/movements, in the vicinity of the site,
- proposed improvements to site accessibility via sustainable modes of travel, such as provision/enhancement of footpath and cycle path linkages, public transport improvements, and servicing arrangements where appropriate,
- a proposed parking strategy and internal vehicular circulation (including number of spaces, parking accumulation, parking layout in relation to other site elements, ratio of operational to non-operational spaces, method of car park operation, overspill parking considerations, disabled parking, motorcycle parking, cycle parking, taxi drop-off points),
- residual vehicular trip impact,
- the transport impacts of site construction, including the requirements of abnormal loads in the construction, use and decommissioning the present development,
- the transport impacts of freight or service operations, and
- if the site of the proposed development has a current use or an extant planning permission with trip patterns/volumes, the net level of change that might arise out of the new proposals should be set out.

Transport Assessment

A TA is required where a development is likely to have significant transport impacts. The precise scope and detail of a TA will vary depending on the site location, scale and nature of the development.

In preparing a TA, a full description of existing site information should be provided by the developer. These baseline conditions need to be established accurately to understand fully the context of the development proposal. This description should include as a minimum:

Existing site information

- a site location plan that shows the proposed development site in relation to the surrounding area and transport system,
- the permitted and existing use of the site,
- a detailed description of the existing land uses in the vicinity of the site, including development plan allocations or potential future uses in the case of undeveloped sites,
- existing site access layout and access constraints, where appropriate,
- whether the location of the site is within or near a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA),
- any abnormal load uses of the current site.

Baseline transport data

- the quantification of the person trips generated from the existing site and their modal distribution, or, where the site is vacant or partially vacant, the person trips which might realistically be generated by any extant planning permission or permitted uses,
- existing public transport facilities (including provision/frequency of services, location of bus stops/train stations, park-and-ride facilities) in the study area; if available, the current level of patronage or usage on the public transport network in the vicinity of the site,
- parking facilities available in the vicinity of the site,
- existing pedestrian and cycle facilities in the vicinity of the site,
- pedestrian and cyclist's movements in the vicinity of the site,
- a description and functional classification of the road network in the vicinity of the site,
- current traffic flows on links and at junctions within the study area.

Guidance on Transport Assessment

- identification of the critical links and junctions on the highway network, with calibrated capacity tests to reflect existing conditions,
- for the study area, establish the current personal injury accident records for the most recent three-year period, or five years, if this is considered to be more appropriate,
- a summary of planned transport improvements within the study area (including type of improvement, implementation schedule and sponsoring agency or highway authority),
- identify current peak periods on the adjacent road network and as required, daily traffic flow data to and from the development site or in the vicinity of the site,
- levels for air quality and noise for the highway network at the site entrance and any other locations where statutory limits might be breached by additional development traffic,
- baseline carbon emissions data for the site, broken down by mode.

The requirements above are not exhaustive and further supplementary information may be required to take account of local conditions and other material considerations. Equally, some developments requiring a TA may not need to cover all of the above points.

Therefore, it is important that the scope of work at this stage is agreed during the preapplication consultation process. Please see the template for a scoping opinion further down in this document.

Public transport assessment

A key issue in seeking the most sustainable solution for a particular development is the need to encourage the use of public transport. The capacity of a public transport route or service is the maximum number of people that can be accommodated on the route within the licensing laws of that mode.

For major developments, it is important to identify the spare capacity on buses, trains and trams in order to establish the ability of the public transport network to accommodate any increase in demand associated with a proposed development.

Such assessments will inform later stages in the TA process in respect of determining modal split, travel plan objectives and in appropriate cases, public transport infrastructure enhancement as part of an overall mitigation package.

A suggested methodology for assessing the capacity of the public transport network includes the following:

- Identify the analysis period, particularly the peak hours of the development and/or the entire transport system,
- Establish the total person trip generation from the proposed development for all travel Modes.

Preparing a transport assessment with public transport

- Estimate the likely modal split for the public transport network (buses, rail and tram),
- Identify the public transport services relevant to, and in the vicinity of, the proposed Development,
- Estimate the existing capacity of the bus/train/tram service by multiplying the number of services by the maximum passenger capacity for each mode (bus, train carriages),
- Estimate the current level of patronage or usage on the public transport network, using the most comprehensive data publicly available,
- Estimate the spare capacity on the public transport network,
- Identify measures to address any shortfall in capacity, where applicable.

The methodology suggested above is intended to provide a general framework for assessing the capacity of the public transport network. It is important that further guidance is sought from the Authority and public transport operators.

Walking/cycling assessment

Another key issue in assessing the sustainability of a development's location will be its accessibility for those walking and cycling. An assessment should be made of the available capacity of the existing cycleway and footpath network in the area of the development. This assessment will help to inform the later stages of the TA process in respect of determining modal split, and travel plan objectives. It will also indicate what enhancements, if any, are required to the local cycleway and footpath network. These assessments should be undertaken using the appropriate analytical tools and methodologies, as agreed with the relevant authorities.

Road network assessment

In addition to assessing the public transport capacity and walking/cycling capacity, an assessment of the available vehicular capacity on the road network in the vicinity of the site should be undertaken in order to establish the potential impacts from the development, as well as the likely mitigation measures that may be required to sustain the development.

Consideration should be given to the available parking facilities in the vicinity of the site and the impact that development could have upon them. This assessment should be made in the context of the parking strategy set by the local planning authority.

These assessments should be undertaken using the appropriate analytical tools and methodologies, as agreed with the Highway Authority.

Traffic data and traffic forecast

The assessment should include recent counts (surveyed within the last three years) for peak period turning movements at critical junctions. In certain instances, for example, where there is known to be a significant level of heavy goods vehicles (HGV) traffic, a classified count should be provided. Additional counts that may be required could include:

- Classified Count – identifying all vehicle types separately.
- manual turning counts (should be conducted at 15-minute intervals) to identify all relevant highway network peak periods,
- 12-hour/24-hour automatic traffic counts (ATC),
- queue length surveys at signal junctions to establish demand and actual traffic flows,
- journey time surveys,
- freight counts,
- abnormal load counts,
- pedestrian and cyclist's count.

The traffic data should reflect the normal traffic flow conditions on the transport network (e.g., non-school holiday periods, typical weather conditions etc.) in the vicinity of the site and should be valid for the intended purposes. It should also take account of holiday periods in tourist areas, where peaks could occur in periods that might normally be considered non-neutral. The recommended periods for data collection are spring and autumn, which include the neutral months of April, May, June, September, and October as described in DMRB Volume 13, Section 1, Part 4.

The criteria for the use of historical traffic data in a TA should be agreed by the LPA together with the highway authority at the pre-application stage.

Where there is a need to project existing or historical traffic data for future year assessments, the preferred option is the use of appropriate local traffic forecasts (such as TEMPRO), provided they offer a robust assessment. In some cases, National Road Traffic Forecast (NRTF) growth rates would be appropriate.

The use of any area-wide traffic models or background growth rates should be agreed with the LPA in conjunction with the highway authority at the pre-application stage.

Safety considerations and accident analysis

The assessment should also identify any significant highway safety issues and provide an analysis of the recent accident history of the study area. The extent of the safety issue considerations and accident analysis will depend on the scale of the proposed development and its location. The need to minimise conflicts between vehicles and other road-user groups should be adequately addressed.

Critical locations on the road network with poor accident records should be identified. This is to determine if the proposed development will exacerbate existing problems or, if proposed, whether highway mitigation works, or traffic management measures will help to alleviate the problems. The accident records at a particular location should be compared with local average accident rates. Where the SRN is involved, it is recommended that appropriate national statistics are also used as a comparison.

Site inspections should be conducted to determine if the proposed location and design of access roads (including visibility/sight distance restrictions) would create an increased potential for accidents. The authority will take account of the likely effect on road safety of any modification and will require road safety audits where appropriate.

Scoping Opinion Template

1) Does the site require a Transport Statement? Or a Transport Assessment?

2) Does it require a Travel Plan?

3) Do the applicants need to discuss the proposal with the Highways Agency?

4) Do routing agreements need putting in place?

5) Trip generations should be derived from TRICS.

6) Trip distribution should be described/ justified.

7) Junction Assessments to be taken into consideration – xyz

8) Committed developments to be taken into consideration – xyz

9) We would expect to see mitigation measures proposed to ensure 'nil-detriment' to the highway network. Mitigation works should be designed to include deliverable junction upgrades/ amendments to accommodate anticipated flows

10) Consider any accident/ collision data within the vicinity of the proposed application site.

11) Details of access including visibility splays.

12) Any Public Rights of Way affected?

13) Any improvements to access to sustainable transport modes to be considered (e.g., footways, dropped kerb crossing points, cycle facilities, bus stop improvements, etc).