

Healthy Places Background Information



Transport Planning

Transport planning

National level

The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for national transport policy and has direct control of national and international networks. It produces statutory guidance for regional and local authorities and provides government funding for much of their work.

Local level

Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) are responsible for a **Local Transport Plan** (LTP). They are upper-tier authorities, unitary authorities or, in England's metropolitan areas, Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs)ⁱ who have drawn up plans in partnership with metropolitan district councilsⁱⁱ.

A Local Transport Plan must further the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy and take into account national transport policy, regional plans (in London) and Local Development Frameworks. Local transport funding is derived from two sources: the regional funding allocation and direct grants from the Department for Transport (DfT). The LTP is an important document in securing DfT funding for specific initiatives.

The Transport Act 2008 has removed a requirement that an LTP be produced every five years, to allow longer-term, more flexible transport planningⁱⁱⁱ. The DfT will no longer formally assess LTPs or impose mandatory targets^{iv}. This is to encourage local authorities to choose their own objectives and make them accountable to their community rather than to central government. Their assessment will be through the LAA process and public service inspections. An LTP must contain strategic policies and implementation plans. These may be separate documents and subject to separate timescales, to allow correspondence with infrastructure projects or community strategies.

An LTP will contain local objectives but these must refer to five over-arching national transport objectives^v:

- to support national economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks
- to reduce transport's emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change
- *to contribute to better safety, security and health and longer life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health*
- to promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society, and

- to improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment.

Government guidance stresses that transport and spatial planning should be closely integrated and recommends joint planning between county and district councils and alignment with Local Development Frameworks. An LTP should recognise that patterns of transport may cross local boundaries, so a joint LTP between several authorities might be appropriate.

Transport and Sustainable Planning

Government guidelines stress the need for integration between transport and sustainable spatial planning at all levels of government:

National level

PPG 13 'Transport' sets out objectives to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level and to promote more sustainable transport choices.

Regional level- London

The RTS is an integral part of, and, fully reflects, the regional spatial strategy¹. The RSS must support the goal of sustainable development within the region.

Local level

LTPs should further the aims contained in the relevant Sustainable Community Strategy. This is the overarching plan for promoting and improving the well-being of an area. LTPs must reflect and support local spatial planning documents including the Local Development Framework² and should fit the context of relevant regional strategies.

The health impact of planning policies on transport depends on the content of those local and regional policies and their guiding community strategy.

Transport planning and two-tier areas

In these areas there is a split between local transport and spatial planning competences. Upper-tier county councils (or ITAs in metropolitan areas) are responsible for the Local Transport Plan in that area. District councils do not have direct responsibility for transport but

¹ PPS 11 Regional Spatial Strategies

² Guidance on Local Transport Plans' DfT 2008

they do have responsibility for local spatial planning and are responsible for producing a Local Development Framework. In addition, *both* councils are required to produce a sustainable community strategy. Joint planning is possible³ but it is not mandatory.

Given the requirements for complementary SCSs, LDFs and LTPs, and to ensure the most effective arrangements for securing transport investment, there is a need for both tiers of authority to cooperate closely in drawing their plans. Government guidance suggests close working between two-tier authorities⁴ and there is now a legal duty to involve local people and authorities in policy decisions⁵.

However, there is still room for some discord between authorities and a danger that healthy policies are compromised by conflicting priorities.

Health Impact Assessment

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is performed as part of the LTP process. Consideration of 'Human Health' is a legal requirement in a SEA⁶ and a health impact assessment (**HIA**) is an integral part of a SEA to identify and inform health issues in Plans.

An HIA should provide an evidence base to help the decision making process in mitigating the negative effects on health and well-being. It should also promote consistency between the LTP and work associated with Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements.

ⁱ Formerly known as passenger transport authorities. Department for Transport. *Guidance on Governance Reviews and the Publication of Governance Schemes*. 2008. See: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/regional/localtransportbill/guidancegovernance.pdf>

ⁱⁱ The Transport Act 2008 transfers this responsibility solely to the Integrated Transport Authority.

ⁱⁱⁱ Local Transport Authorities may replace their plans as they see fit (Transport Act 2000 s.109(2) as amended). For example, Oxfordshire County Council is in the process of drawing up an LTP for the next 20 years.

^{iv} Department for Transport. *Guidance on Local Transport Plans*. 2008. London: Department for Transport.

^v Department for Transport. *Delivering a Sustainable Transport System: Consultation on Planning for 2014 and Beyond*. See: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/closed/planning/>

³ Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 permits an authority to discharge any functions jointly with another
⁴ 'Creating Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities' DCMS statutory guidance 2008; 'Guidance on Local Transport Plans' DfT 2008; PPG 13: Transport; PPS 11 'Creating, strong safe and prosperous communities through local spatial planning'.

⁵ Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007; s.138

⁶ EU Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment and effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, Implemented in England via the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004/1633)