



**TRANSPORT  
SCOTLAND**  
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

# **Development Planning Transport Appraisal Guidance (DPTAG)**

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# Introduction

## Purpose of this Document

Development Planning Transport Appraisal Guidance (DPTAG) will help in the preparation of a transport appraisal to support decision making for Local Development Plans (LDPs).

This Guidance will:

- Demonstrate when a transport appraisal should be undertaken.
- Highlight policies to be considered in the appraisal process.
- Set out differing appraisal levels and when these are applicable.

[The Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#) was introduced as part of the Scottish Government's reforms to the planning system and amended the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

The Act gave Scotland's fourth [National Planning Framework \(NPF4\)](#) enhanced status in the development plan process, whilst also introducing changes to reform the LDP plan-making processes. NPF4 contains 33 National Planning Policies.

Policy 13: Sustainable Transport directly references the need to undertake a proportionate transport appraisal and that developments should prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport for everyday travel.

Policy 18: Infrastructure First encourages, promotes and facilitates an early understanding of infrastructure needs, which puts infrastructure considerations at the heart of placemaking. It also promotes the NTS2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies and that delivery of infrastructure to meet community needs is clear.

[The Scottish Government's LDP Guidance document](#), published in 2023, sets out the expectations for preparing and implementing Local Development Plans under the reformed planning system, including the range of factors to be considered during the

process of land allocation. The need to undertake a proportionate transport appraisal is detailed within the LDP Guidance:

*“A critical part of LDP preparation will be the transport appraisal, which should be completed in time to inform the Proposed Plan and published alongside the Proposed Plan.”*

## When Should DPTAG be Used?

DPTAG is to assist planning authorities in the development of their LDPs. NPF4 Policy 13 Sustainable Transport outlines that LDPs should be informed by an appropriate and effective transport appraisal undertaken in accordance with relevant guidance.

**DPTAG focuses on the transport appraisal process in the context of the Strategic Transport Network and the potential for cumulative impacts arising from the LDP spatial strategy or options.**

**However, the interface between the strategic and local networks is such that the principles are mutually applicable and there may be impacts on local transport networks and services which can also be appraised using this guidance.**

The Strategic Transport Network includes trunk roads, the rail network and the ferry network (including ferry terminals) for which the Scottish Government/Transport Scotland is responsible.

Transport Scotland must be consulted in relation to any appraisal where development has the potential to impact the Strategic Transport Network and also where mitigation measures may be required.

Early and continued engagement is encouraged. This will help to minimise risks in the transport appraisal and LDP preparation process, with all parties working towards ensuring that LDPs are fully informed by a robust and appropriate appraisal.

## Transport Scotland's Role in Planning

Transport Scotland is the national transport agency for Scotland, operating as an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government. Its main role is to deliver the government's vision for transport as set out in the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2). It is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the trunk road and rail networks, forming part of the Strategic Transport Network. Transport Scotland is also responsible for overarching ferry policy and recognises the important role ferries have for island and peninsula communities and transport connectivity.

Aviation policy is a reserved matter and while offsetting the environmental impacts of aviation will be a challenge, there are real opportunities to work with the aviation sector to help Scotland succeed. Transport Scotland is committed to working collaboratively with Scottish airports to take measures to reduce emissions on the ground from both aircraft and surface vehicles. Transport Scotland can provide further advice on a case-by-case basis should any planning authority consider that its LDP spatial strategy or options should be appraised against aviation specifically. However, Transport Scotland would not expect authorities to appraise this as a matter of course and this guidance makes no further reference to aviation. Multimodal journeys to and from airports are expected to be considered as part of the wider LDP appraisal.

Transport Scotland has a statutory responsibility to assist in the preparation of LDPs, given the same status as a Key Agency as detailed within the LDP Guidance (2023); and in the determination of certain planning applications to ensure that impacts have been considered and addressed to allow the safe and efficient operation of the Strategic Transport Network.

## Benefits of Transport Appraisal

A high quality transport appraisal that is proportionate and evidence-based:

- Provides a robust framework for considering land use and transport together, which will assist in the delivery of the plan.

- Will show how choices for the Strategic Transport Network affect the wider social, economic, environmental and safety policy aims of the plan.
- Will inform investment decision making for proposed enhancements to the Strategic Transport Network and, where relevant, comply with statutory approval processes for infrastructure schemes.
- Will support the identification of a clear funding and delivery pathway for land that is to be safeguarded for development, where there is an identified impact on the Strategic Transport Network.
- Will ensure an infrastructure first approach to planning and alignment with the NTS Sustainable Travel and Sustainable Investment Hierarchies.
- Encourages early collaboration and engagement between planning authorities and Transport Scotland to ensure appropriate use of public resources and that timescales are reasonable.
- May reduce appraisal burdens at the Development Management stage.

This Guidance highlights the different approaches that should be considered by planning authorities. This will help to enable agreement on the approach, strategy and transport interventions set out in LDPs as they affect the Strategic Transport Network.

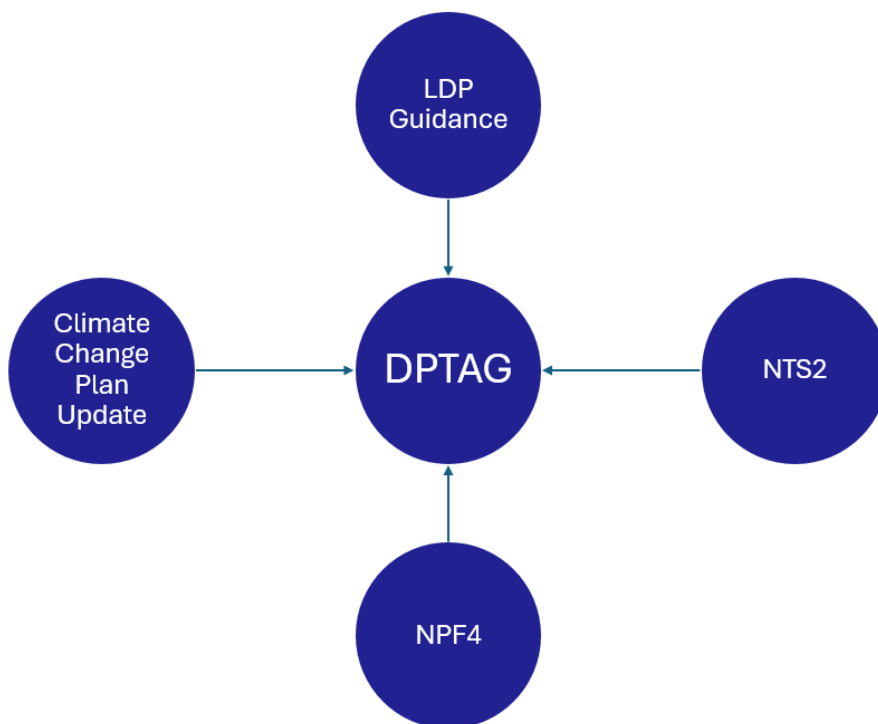
**This Guidance focuses on the transport appraisal aspect of plan preparation.**

**Transport Scotland's Transport Assessment Guidance aids in the process of ensuring mechanisms are in place to review the impacts that development(s) will have on the transport system at the development management stage.**

## Background Context

An overview of key background documents that will influence and help shape the transport appraisal are shown in Figure 1. They include LDP Guidance, NTS2, NPF4 and the Climate Change Plan, which are summarised below.

**Figure 1 – DPTAG Background Context**



## National Planning Framework 4

NPF4 was adopted by the Scottish Government in 2023 and is the national spatial strategy for Scotland. It sets out national spatial principles, regional priorities, national developments and national planning policy.



The Framework sets out policies to guide development and gives significant weight to the global climate emergency to ensure it is recognised as a priority in all plans and decisions. It sets out climate mitigation and adaptation considerations to ensure that emissions from new developments are minimised as far as possible. NPF4 also acknowledges the need to plan places in a way that reduces the need to travel, particularly by unsustainable modes, and promotes a shift to active and sustainable travel. This is reflected in policies relating to the climate and nature crises, climate mitigation and adaptation, sustainable transport, local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods, and an infrastructure first approach.

A strategic priority of the Scottish Government is growing the economy, with key economic drivers that NPF4 identifies being central to shaping Scotland's future economy and places. These include transition to a net zero economy, a well-being economy, innovation and investment, place-based economic development, infrastructure and connectivity, housing and construction.

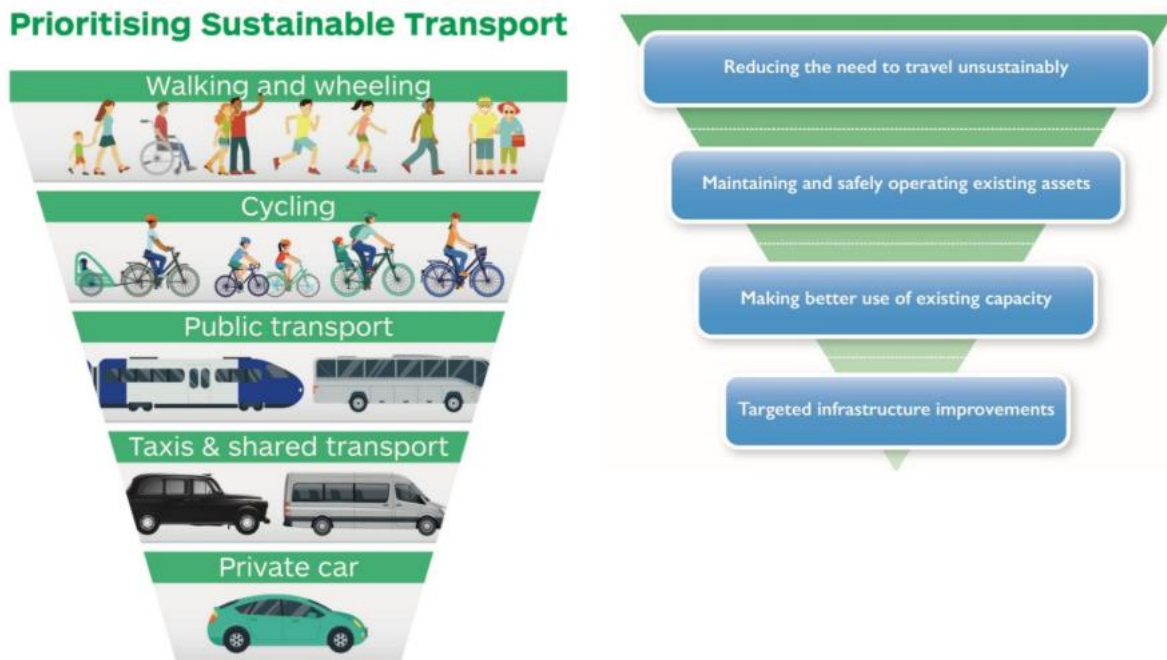
## National Transport Strategy 2

The [Second National Transport Strategy](#) (NTS2) provides the national transport policy framework for Scotland and sets out four key priorities:

- Reducing inequality.
- Taking climate action.
- Helping deliver inclusive economic growth.
- Improving health and wellbeing.

The [Sustainable Travel Hierarchy](#), shown in Figure 2 overleaf prioritises sustainable transport, with walking and wheeling at the top of the hierarchy, followed by cycling, public transport, taxis and shared transport, and private car being at the bottom. Policy is shaped by the need to encourage increased use of sustainable modes of transport.

The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy also shown in Figure 2 overleaf is



**Figure 2 – Sustainable Travel and Investment Hierarchies**





aimed at reducing the need to travel unsustainably, which is at the top of the hierarchy, followed by investment aimed at maintaining and safely operating existing assets, taking due consideration of the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change. Following this is investment aimed at promoting a range of measures, including innovative solutions, to make better use of existing capacity, ensuring that existing transport networks and systems are fully optimised (these may include technology-based, regulatory, fiscal or value engineering solutions to asset renewals). Investment in targeted infrastructure improvements is at the bottom of the hierarchy.

The Sustainable Investment Hierarchy is used to inform future investment decisions and ensure transport options that focus on reducing inequalities and the need to travel unsustainably are prioritised. Development plans should not bring forward sites and associated infrastructure improvements without first considering the requirement for, and effectiveness of, interventions in the first three categories at the top of the investment hierarchy.

# Climate Change Plan Update and Route Map

[Scotland’s Climate Change Plan update \(2020\)](#) set out a world-leading commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20 per cent by 2030 to help achieve the target for net zero emissions by 2045. Transport Scotland produced a draft [Route Map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030](#) for public consultation in 2022, which set out ways in which we can achieve four key behaviour changes shown in Figure 3. Reducing the need to travel, which could include switching to online alternatives for services or shopping. Living well locally, relates to accessing services and facilities in the local area, connecting to the NPF4 Policy 15. Switching modes is promoting more sustainable modes of transport instead of the private car, and combining trips or sharing journeys could be an alternative in some geographical areas or an option for those attending the same facilities or using the same services.

**Figure 3 - Key behaviour changes required to achieve a national reduction in car use**

Reducing the need to travel	Living well locally	Switching modes	Combining or sharing car trips
<p>Using online options may be particularly important in rural or island communities, where distances may be greater to local services, as well as for purchasing goods that are more difficult to transport by active travel or public transport. Reducing travel can also save time and money.</p> 	<p>Particularly important in urban and suburban areas as well as towns and villages. Accessing goods, services, amenities and social connections locally benefits local economies and helps revitalise communities.</p> 	<p>Switching to walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport may be more feasible if a local destination has already been chosen. Active modes and public transport provide opportunities for physical activity which benefits physical health and mental wellbeing.</p> 	<p>Particularly important in some geographical areas, for people with specific disabilities and for certain trip-purposes, where an alternative mode is not feasible. Sharing with others* can provide opportunities for social connection which can boost wellbeing.</p>  <p><small>*COVID-19 permitting</small></p>

The Scottish Government has confirmed a review of the 20% by 2030 target for car use reduction on receipt of Climate Change Committee advice, and informed by other relevant evidence, to develop a new, longer-term target. This is set out in the Achieving Car Use Reduction in Scotland: [Renewed Policy Statement](#) published in

June 2025. However, the Scottish Government remains steadfastly committed to reducing car use across Scotland in a way which is fair and supports a just transition to net zero emissions by 2045.

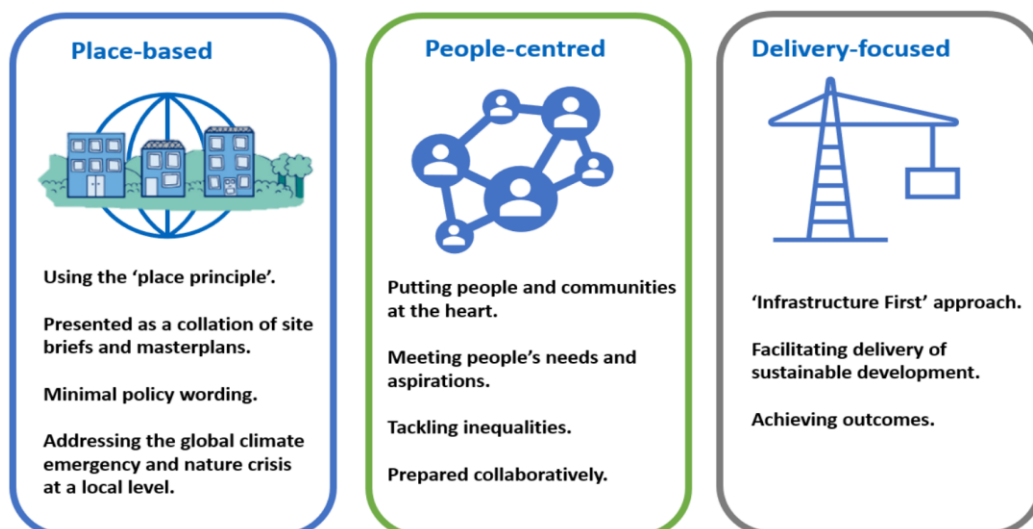
The Scottish Government will publish a renewed policy on car use reduction and all planning authorities should produce an LDP which will work towards the renewed ambition to reduce car use. Transport Scotland will continue to work with planning authorities to support this.

## Local Development Planning Guidance

The Scottish Government’s LDP Guidance outlines the Scottish Government’s expectations for implementing LDPs. It highlights that they should consider the ambitions and outcomes of an area over the next 20 years.

The LDP principles are set out in Figure 4. They should be Place-based, focussing on place briefs and masterplans with minimal policies and wording. People-centred, putting people and community needs at the fore front of planning; and Delivery-focused which centres on outcomes and an Infrastructure First approach.

**Figure 4 – LDP Principles**



The LDP Guidance sets out the requirements for the transport appraisal. It will:

- Provide a cumulative transport appraisal of the impact of the spatial strategy.
- Be at a scale and level of detail proportionate to the nature of the issues and proposals being considered, including their funding requirements.
- Appraise and identify appropriate multimodal mitigation measures if required, to assist in the delivery of the spatial strategy which will help towards delivering the national reduction in car use and target of net zero by 2045.
- Identify mitigation measures in accordance with the NTS2 Sustainable Travel and Investment Hierarchies, their funding and provide information on delivery.
- Inform and align with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Report and the Delivery Programme.
- Promote a place-based and people-centred approach.

The LDP Guidance also sets out data and information requirements to be included within the Evidence Report, Proposed Plan and Delivery Programme. It details the Evidence Report should include a commitment to undertaking a transport appraisal and that discussions have taken place with Transport Scotland. It also details stakeholder engagement, where views will be provided on the sufficiency of the evidence.

## Triple Access Planning

In advance of preparing a development plan, planning authorities should consider the interdependency between physical and spatial proximity as well as digital access. This transport planning concept, known as [Triple Access Planning](#), encourages the integration of land use and transport planning along with digital planning, all of which influence decisions around where development should take place to ensure sustainable mobility patterns. This is an important concept which can shape the land use plans; determining where to locate developments and what infrastructure may be needed to plan for greater sustainable access to services, jobs and amenities.

Sites that are already well served and connected by transport infrastructure should be prioritised ahead of those that require investment. As such, Triple Access

Planning aligns with NPF4 Policy 18 Infrastructure First, NTS2 and is detailed within LDP Guidance (2023).

Site allocation should consider proximity to transport nodes and the degree to which sites are served by non-car modes for trip generating uses and encouraging higher densities in these locations. Sites that are not well served by sustainable modes and cannot be made accessible without significant expenditure should not be allocated for significant trip generating development.

A place-based plan should typically:

- Identify how future development can be accessed sustainably without revenue support from the Government, or how it will be funded and delivered by the private sector.
- Allocate land well served by existing or committed infrastructure and services before considering the need for additional infrastructure, in line with NTS2 Sustainable Travel and Investment Hierarchies and spatial, physical and digital access considerations.

## Transport Investment

The [Second Strategic Transport Projects Review \(STPR2\)](#) will inform the Scottish Government's transport investment programme over the long term and will inform future Budgets, Spending Reviews and wider government investment plans and strategies.

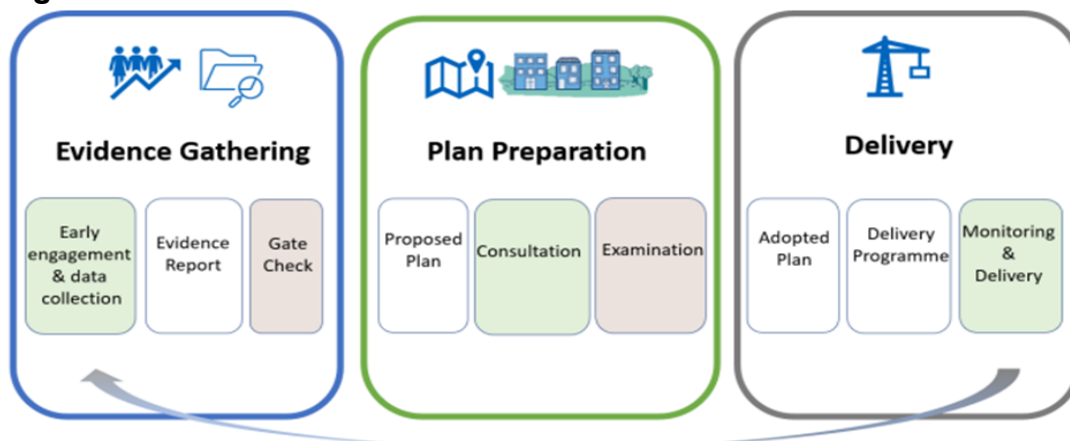
Through engagement on development plans, Transport Scotland will consider interventions on the Strategic Transport Network that support the delivery of an LDP. The LDP will require to demonstrate that there is a delivery mechanism for such interventions without funding support from the Scottish Government.

# The LDP Process

## Introduction

The key stages in preparing an LDP are set out within the Scottish Government’s LDP Guidance and are summarised in Figure 5. The stages can be grouped into 3 distinct phases. Evidence Gathering is the initial information gathering stage and the preparation of the Evidence Report that is submitted to the Department for Planning and Environmental Appeals (DPEA) for Gatecheck. The Plan Preparation stage involves preparing and consulting on the plan strategy which is then submitted to the DPEA for Examination. The Delivery stage focuses on outcomes, Delivery Programme and monitoring.

**Figure 5 - The LDP Process**

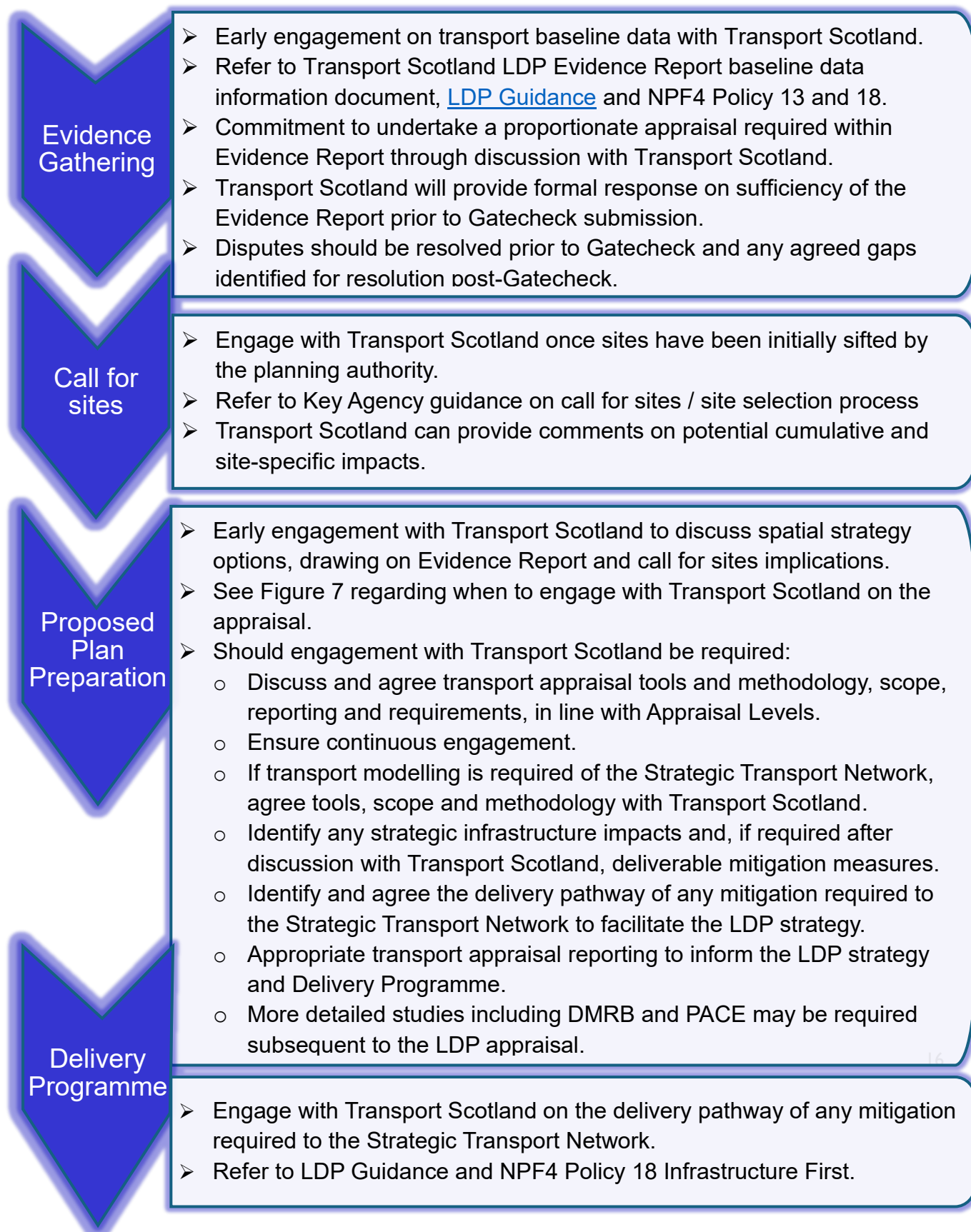


Transport appraisal is a key element of the Plan Preparation stage. It should be completed in time to inform the Proposed Plan spatial strategy, building on the information and data at the Evidence Gathering stage.

## Engagement with Transport Scotland

Transport Scotland should be engaged throughout Evidence Gathering, Plan Preparation and Delivery stages, including the transport appraisal, as shown in Figure 6 overleaf.

**Figure 6 – LDP stages and engagement timeline**





Transport Scotland should be able to fully understand any cumulative impacts on the Strategic Transport Network and the appropriateness of any mitigation measures to ensure the network's safe and effective operation. The appraisal should set out the potential impact in an appropriate and agreed manner, as well as any associated mitigation and facilitate an understanding of a clear delivery pathway, to avoid delays to the plan process and delivery of the outcomes.

Proposed mitigation measures to be taken forward for delivery will be subject to all statutory processes and must take into account appropriate design and business case guidance.

**Plans should be informed by evidence of an area's transport infrastructure, and an appraisal of the land use proposals on the transport network.**

**This should identify any potential transport impacts and deliverable mitigation proposed to inform the plan's infrastructure first approach.**

**Where there is likely to be an impact on the trunk road, rail or ferry network, early engagement with Transport Scotland is required.**

## Evidence Gathering

Evidence has a fundamental role in the transport appraisal process, which informs both the emerging plan and the level of support Transport Scotland is able to offer that plan.

**Transport Scotland's Local Development Plan Evidence Report: Baseline Information Guidance sets out further information on our role and includes data sources to assist in the preparation of a sufficient evidence base. A link to this document has been sent to specific planning authority contacts. These can be re-issued on request.**

Early and continued engagement with stakeholders, including Transport Scotland, should be undertaken at this stage to gather data on the information required within the LDP Guidance. For transport this will relate to the existing transport infrastructure and services, how they are used, their availability, accessibility, capacity, constraints, and condition, including cross boundary considerations, in line with NPF4 Policies 13 and 18. Transport Scotland will focus on this evidence in relation to the Strategic Transport Network. Evidence collated for the development of Local and Regional Transport Strategies must be used to inform the evidence base for the LDP Evidence Report.

The information gathered at this stage for the Evidence Report can be further utilised and developed within the transport appraisal process. The Evidence Report should set out a commitment to undertake a transport appraisal prior to publication of the Proposed Plan in line with LDP Guidance. It should set out that discussions have taken place with Transport Scotland on the appraisal and the way forward.

Formal agreement from Transport Scotland on the sufficiency of the data at this stage, prior to submission to Gatecheck, is required as set out within LDP Guidance. Planning authorities should clearly set out the engagement undertaken and the steps taken to alleviate any concerns or disputes.

## Call for Sites / Site Appraisal Stage

Developers can help facilitate this stage by undertaking work to support their proposed development for inclusion within the plan. Developers may have worked up details on potential phasing of land uses, concept master plans, transport and financial viability assessments, all of which can usefully inform the plan preparation process. This information will be helpful to the planning authority and be used to identify preferred sites for inclusion within the plan.

Key Agencies can consult on any Call for Sites stage undertaken by a planning authority, and Transport Scotland will provide comments on the potential cumulative impact of sites and highlight any relevant site-specific issues. It is advised that planning authorities take cognisance of the Guidance published by the Key Agency Group for consulting at this stage as this will be a resource intensive stage for Key Agencies.

## Undertaking the Transport Appraisal

The requirement to undertake a transport appraisal should have been established and acknowledged within the Evidence Report.

To secure the greatest level of support for a Proposed Plan, the transport appraisal should be undertaken following publication of the Evidence Report post Gatecheck. Depending on specific site characteristics, this process may be iterative.

There may be circumstances whereby a planning authority deems a transport appraisal not to be appropriate, depending on the scale, size and location of development proposals. The risk associated with this approach sits with the planning authority. Whilst it could be considered unlikely, there is no guarantee that an appraisal will not be required later in the planning process.

Figure 7 sets out initial engagement or a scoping exercise with Transport Scotland, which is considered good practice to help clarify and agree the requirement, scope and appraisal level where relevant.

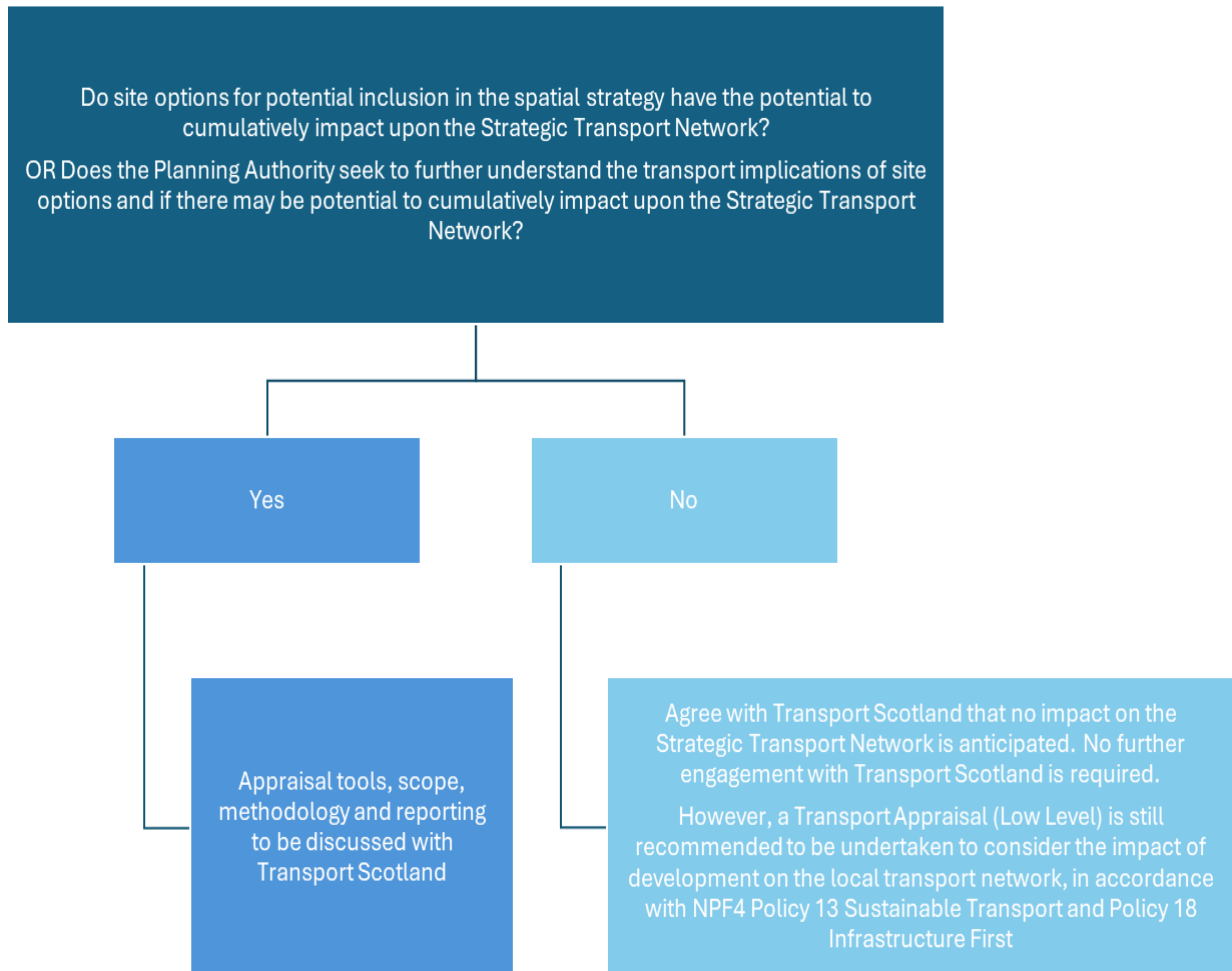
Figure 7 asks 'Do site options for potential inclusion in the spatial strategy have the potential to cumulatively impact on the Strategic Transport Network; or does an authority seek to further understand the transport implications of the site options and if there may be potential to cumulatively impact the Strategic Transport Network'. If the answer is 'Yes', then engagement should be undertaken with Transport Scotland and the appraisal tools, scope, methodology and reporting should be discussed with Transport Scotland

If the planning authority do not consider site options for potential inclusion in the spatial strategy have the potential to cumulatively impact on the Strategic Transport Network; or the authority is not seeking to further understand the transport implications of the site options; or if there may be no potential cumulative impact the Strategic Transport Network, then the 'No' option is taken.

This route sets out that agreement should be reached with Transport Scotland that no impact on the Strategic Transport Network is anticipated. No further engagement with Transport Scotland is then required.

A transport appraisal (Low Level) is still recommended to be undertaken to consider the impact of development on the local transport network, in accordance with NPF4 Policy 13 Sustainable Transport and Policy 18 Infrastructure First.

**Figure 7 – Engagement / Scoping exercise with Transport Scotland**



**Transport Scotland will offer advice on appraisal and modelling tools and also feedback and comments on proposals as they evolve.**

This will contribute to keeping appraisals proportionate and associated resources and timescales to a minimum.

Development plan teams are encouraged to secure the benefits of early and continued engagement.

## Proposed Plan Preparation

The Proposed Plan should ensure that both the planning authority and Transport Scotland are clear about the plan's vision and land use strategy and the decisions necessary about strategic infrastructure delivery and investment.

The Proposed Plan should identify infrastructure required to deliver the spatial strategy addressing any cumulative impacts, and should also help to identify where, how and when required infrastructure will be funded and delivered in accordance with NPF4 Policy 18. LDP Guidance states that in preparing the spatial strategy, consideration should be given to the:

- Evidence of the area's existing and committed transport infrastructure capacity.
- Strategic and cross-boundary transport connectivity, including links to the wider transport network (beyond development site boundaries).
- Climate resilience of existing and planned transport infrastructure including changing rainfall patterns, flood and storm drainage and temperatures.
- Committed transport infrastructure investment (including active travel) and delivery pathways.

The spatial strategy should detail what multimodal transport infrastructure is required to support the plan's vision. This should be in accordance with NPF4 Policy 13 and 15 and the NTS2 sustainable travel and investment hierarchies. The plan should identify where existing infrastructure capacity is to be used to support the creation of places, also where new or enhanced infrastructure is required, and the likely scale, location, timing and procurement of that required infrastructure.

Firm proposals expected to be delivered in the plan period should be clearly differentiated from land safeguarded in the long-term for potential or aspirational future development.

Plans should not allocate sites for development where cumulative transport infrastructure impacts and requirements on the Strategic Transport Network have not been identified or cannot be delivered.

It may be considered acceptable to reserve land for potential future transport infrastructure provided it is not required to realise the plan objectives, and a commitment is made to appraise any potential infrastructure measures following the appropriate process. This should be made clear within the plan. The planning authority should consider all the risks to this approach before safeguarding land.

Transport Scotland's support of land use and transport interventions does not imply funding support for such interventions.

Transport Scotland may be unable to provide support to the Proposed Plan when:

- There is insufficient detail on either the proposed land uses or associated transport appraisal to enable an informed view of the cumulative impacts on the Strategic Transport Network.
- The spatial strategy or specific land uses compromise the performance and safety of the Strategic Transport Network, and no mitigation is proposed; or mitigation is proposed without a clear funding and delivery pathway.

# Transport Appraisal Approach

## Overview

The approach to transport appraisal will be unique to each LDP, given each area will have its own set of challenges and risks which will influence spatial strategy development and delivery. There is no one size fits all for the appraisal and the approach is dependent on the location, scale and type of development, delivery risks and the potential impact on the Strategic Transport Network.

The local network can also be appraised or included, using appropriate tools and can be appraised at the same time as the Strategic Transport Network. However, Transport Scotland is focused on the impact on the Strategic Transport Network.

Planning authorities should contact Transport Scotland at the earliest opportunity to scope the appraisal approach, discuss appropriate modelling tools to use (if required) and reporting required. An authority should come prepared for this discussion, potentially having information on strategy options, scenarios, key constraints and opportunities and any potential risks. This engagement should continue throughout the plan process.

Transport Scotland's [Land-use And Transport Integration in Scotland \(LATIS\)](#) service is available to provide quantified evidence and this can assist with transport appraisals. The service is operated by Transport Scotland to meet the appraisal and modelling needs of the Scottish Government, project teams within Transport Scotland and external organisations. LATIS includes elements such as models, planning support and data collection. Planning authorities should contact Transport Scotland directly if they wish to access LATIS models or data to support appraisals.

It is expected that the transport appraisal will inform and align with the SEA Report and the Delivery Programme.



## Appraisal Levels

This section explains the appraisal levels that may be appropriate, depending on the level of risk associated with plan delivery, location and scale of development and potential type and scale of transport mitigation measures proposed. There are three levels: low, medium or high. These are summarised in Figure 8 on page 27.

It may be suitable to amend the approach and/or move level as more information is gathered, or if the spatial strategy changes, and flexibility in approach may be required where circumstances dictate. Different approaches could be undertaken for different geographical areas within an authority boundary. Authorities may also work together to undertake an appraisal, if appropriate and discussed with Transport Scotland.

Planning authorities are expected to consider potential cross-boundary transport impacts arising from spatial strategy options or developments within their own boundaries, where these affect strategic transport infrastructure in adjacent authorities. Authorities may also wish to appraise cross-boundary impacts on local infrastructure in neighbouring areas, but this does not need to be discussed with Transport Scotland.

Agreement from Transport Scotland on the appraisal level adopted by a planning authority can be provided in formal correspondence, thus ensuring a mutual understanding of the appraisal and key requirements. This provides transparency to the process and ensures that all involved understand their role. Further discussions on appraisal stages, inputs, scenarios and outputs are recommended.

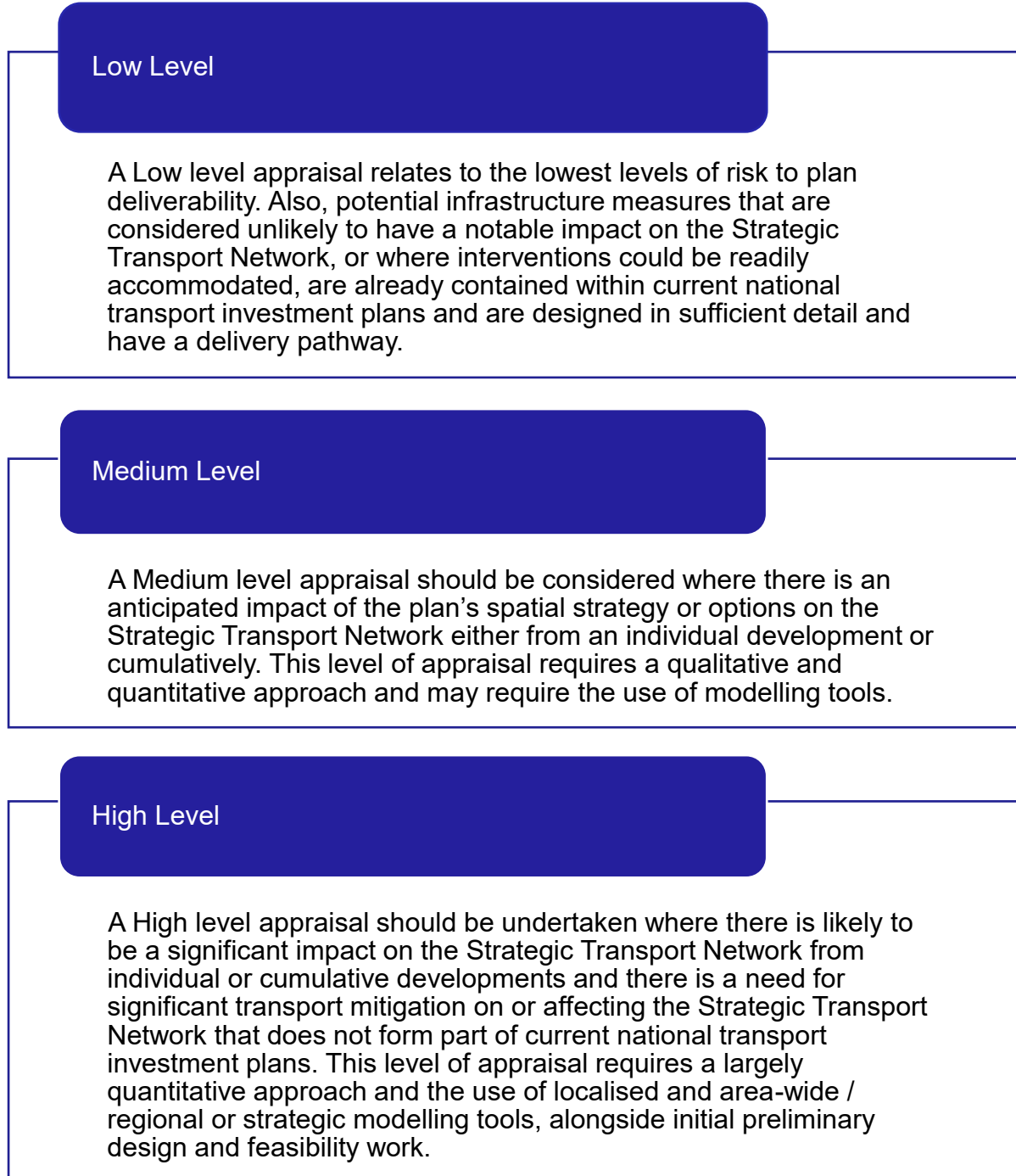
Depending on the level of risk associated with plan deliverability, scale and location of development, and the appraisal level most suitable, it may be appropriate to follow Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) principles. These include identification of problems and opportunities, development of Transport Planning Objectives, option generation and sifting, consideration of Environment; Climate Change; Health, Safety and Wellbeing; Economy; and Equality and Accessibility. Further details are available in the [STAG Managers' Guide](#).

A high-level appraisal will typically be expected to follow these principles to a higher degree. City Deal proposals and other funded infrastructure projects and how to include them in the appraisal should be discussed with Transport Scotland as Deal projects and timescales can evolve.

Place-based principles such as local living and low car neighbourhoods should be considered reflecting NPF4 Policies 13 (Sustainable Transport), 15 (Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods) and 18 (Infrastructure First) for all appraisal levels.

It is recognised that land may become available for development unexpectedly that is not allocated within an LDP, classed as windfall. In these circumstances, it is acknowledged that transport modelling and the spatial strategy cannot capture all possibilities. It is suggested if modelling has been undertaken and such a site/s is submitted for planning consent, the model could potentially be re-run with the site/s added, if deemed necessary.

**Figure 8 – Overview of Appraisal Levels**



## Low Level Appraisal

A Low level appraisal is likely to be required where:

- Potential demand is deemed to be unlikely to have a notable impact on the Strategic Transport Network; or
- Required interventions on or affecting the Strategic Transport Network are minimal and can be readily accommodated; or
- Required interventions on or affecting the Strategic Transport Network are contained within current national transport investment plans and are designed in sufficient detail and have a delivery pathway.

The level of detail provided, mainly or solely using a qualitative approach, should mean that it is possible to:

- Provide the rationale for the land use scenarios which should be in line with the sustainable travel and investment hierarchies.
- Justify that there is no significant or cumulative impact to the Strategic Transport Network or that any impact can be sufficiently accommodated on the existing network or through targeted deliverable measures, or at the development management stage.

A Low level appraisal should consider:

- Sustainable Investment Hierarchy (with supporting narrative).
- Sustainable Travel Hierarchy (with supporting narrative).
- Statutory Impact Assessments – qualitative assessment.
- Alignment with relevant NPF4 policies.
- Contribution to NTS2 outcomes and STPR2 Recommendations.
- Contribution to CCPU ambition to reduce car kilometres travelled.
- Initial feasibility work, if necessary, to confirm deliverability to indicated line / layout / land take.

Supporting analysis and tools are available to facilitate the consideration of the impact on the surrounding transport networks, mode shift and potentially on cross-boundary issues. This may include:

- Qualitative methods.
- Localised existing up to date modelling / GIS.
- Information developed from the SEA Report.
- Information from existing Transport Assessments.
- Existing data knowledge (for example, demographics, network and service timetables, Census, Transport and Travel in Scotland (TATIS), Scottish Household Survey (SHS), Scottish Transport Statistics).
- Land use planning data.

Examples of transport mitigation may include:

- Station enhancements (localised access and other improved facilities).
- Site specific improvements (localised – traffic signals, junction amendment / widening) which can be determined fully at the development management stage.

This level of appraisal may identify individual and / or package(s) of transport mitigation that are required to support the plan and include consideration of realistic alternative options, if applicable.

## Medium Level Appraisal

A Medium level appraisal is likely to be required where:

- There is an identified impact to parts of the Strategic Transport Network.
- The potential impact may require an intervention to be considered which may have consequences on the Strategic Transport Network.
- Significant change in land use has been previously unaccounted for in development plans and is not fed into current national transport investment plans.
- The failure to identify potential deliverable transport mitigation options could impact on the ability for plan proposals to be delivered.

The appraisal should demonstrate that the economic, environmental and safety issues associated with the solution have been identified and, where appropriate, mitigation proposed.

A Medium level appraisal may require modelling tools, such as localised or area-wide multimodal transport models where appropriate, which will facilitate the consideration of the impact of the different transport mitigation options on the surrounding transport networks, mode shift and potentially on cross-boundary issues.

The level of detail, provided through qualitative and quantitative appraisal, should mean that it is possible to:

- Provide the rationale for the land use scenarios and further, more detailed, consideration of the transport mitigation.
- Justify that any impact to the Strategic Transport Network can be sufficiently accommodated on the existing network or through targeted deliverable measures and does not compromise safety on the network.

A Medium level appraisal should consider:

- STAG principles and / or assessment criteria.

- Sustainable Investment Hierarchy (with supporting narrative).
- Sustainable Travel Hierarchy (with supporting narrative).
- Statutory Impact Assessments – qualitative assessment.
- Alignment with relevant NPF4 policies.
- Contribution to NTS2 outcomes and STPR2 Recommendations.
- Contribution to CCPU ambition to reduce car kilometres travelled.
- Initial feasibility work to confirm deliverability to indicated line / layout / land take.
- Delivery pathway.

Supporting analysis and tools are available to facilitate the consideration of the impact and any mitigation measures on the surrounding transport networks, mode shift and potentially on cross-boundary issues. This may include:

- Available models and software (for example junction, network, public transport).
- Accessibility analysis, GIS, TRACC.
- Information from existing Transport Assessments.

Modelling and analysis parameters and scenarios, and phasing and delivery of allocations, should be considered and agreed in advance with Transport Scotland.

Examples of transport mitigation may include:

- Ferry or rail terminal capacity enhancements (localised marshalling and/or car park enhancement, access and other improved facilities).
- New junction or improvements to multiple junctions or significant improvements to single junctions on single carriageways.

This level should identify individual and / or package(s) of transport mitigation that are required to support the development plan and include consideration of realistic alternative options, if applicable.

## High Level Appraisal

A High level appraisal is likely to be required where:

- There are significant land use changes which present a significant impact to locations on the Strategic Transport Network that require to be mitigated.
- There is a need for significant transport mitigation options on or affecting the Strategic Transport Network that do not form part of current national transport investment plans.

The appraisal should provide quantified rationale and confirm the principle of deliverability, considering the cumulative impact of development, and initial preliminary design and feasibility work (commensurate with the extent of change to, or effect on, the Strategic Transport Network emerging from the plan preparation process). It should also identify the line / layout and land take of relevant mitigation.

A High level appraisal requires the use of localised and area-wide / regional or strategic modelling tools. In determining and designing appropriate mitigation measures, cognisance of relevant applicable design guidance and any future business case or delivery processes will be required.

Consideration should be given to the requirement for Community Needs Assessments (if upgrading a ferry terminal / port / harbour or increasing ferry services) and [Network Rail Investment in Stations Guidance](#) (if a new rail station is proposed).

The level of detail, provided through a largely quantitative appraisal, should mean that it is possible to:

- Provide the rationale for the land use scenarios and further, more detailed, consideration of the transport mitigation.
- Demonstrate that the economic, environmental and safety issues associated with the solution have been identified and, where appropriate, mitigation proposed.
- Undertake technical development, design and feasibility work in order to: confirm that there is an acceptable technical solution; identify land that has to be



safeguarded within the plan to procure the solution; and provide a suitable delivery pathway taking cognisance of current investment priorities.

A High level appraisal should consider:

- STAG principles and / or assessment criteria.
- Sustainable Investment Hierarchy (with supporting narrative).
- Sustainable Travel Hierarchy (with supporting narrative).
- Statutory Impact Assessments – qualitative assessment.
- Alignment with relevant NPF policies.
- Contribution to NTS2 outcomes and STPR2 recommendations.
- Contribution to CCPU national ambition to reduce car kilometres travelled.
- Initial feasibility work to confirm deliverability to indicated line / layout / land take.
- Delivery pathway.

Supporting analysis and tools are available to facilitate the consideration of the impact and any required mitigation on the surrounding transport networks, mode shift and potentially on cross-boundary issues. This may include:

- Available models and software (for example junction, network, public transport).
- Accessibility analysis, GIS, TRACC.
- Information from existing Transport Assessments.
- Cognisance of the broad principles of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) and Project Acceleration in a Controlled Environment (PACE) (as required).
- Consideration of Community Needs Assessments and Network Rail Investment in Stations Guidance (as required).

Modelling and analysis parameters and scenarios, and phasing and delivery of allocations, should be considered and agreed in advance with Transport Scotland.

Examples of transport mitigation may include:

- New rail station.
- Increased train capacity services (frequency / stopping pattern amendments / platform extensions).
- Upgrade to ferry terminal / port / harbour.
- Increased ferry services (frequency / timetable amendments) and/or additional vessels.
- New at grade or grade separated junction on the dual carriageway or motorway network.
- Significant junction upgrades and capacity enhancements.

This appraisal level should identify individual and / or package(s) of transport mitigation options that are required to support the development plan and include consideration of realistic alternative options.

## Transport Appraisal Reporting

Reporting to support the transport appraisal is dependent on the approach undertaken, which is directly informed by the nature and scale of proposed development and potential impact on the Strategic Transport Network. As noted in the Overview of this section, Transport Scotland can advise on the level of reporting required. Reporting should be proportionate to the appraisal approach and potential impacts and may cover:

- Statement(s) to confirm there is considered to be no / low impact on the Strategic Transport Network and the supporting evidence justifying this approach.
- A transport appraisal chapter in the Proposed Plan.
- Site specific information and appraisal outcomes within settlement statements.
- Separate DPTAG report.

Modelling requirements and how this feeds into the appraisal and reporting can be discussed with Transport Scotland. Modelling work may be audited by Transport Scotland and its consultants.

Correspondence with Transport Scotland regarding the appraisal and its reporting should be clear, concise, and ideally delivered in a timely and consolidated manner, rather than in a piecemeal fashion. A final report should be issued to Transport Scotland. Reporting should clearly outline the rationale for the approach taken and accordance with national policies and the sustainable travel and investment hierarchies, conclusions of the appraisal, and how the appraisal will influence the Proposed Plan and Delivery Programme.

Agreement should be reached with Transport Scotland before transport mitigation proposals identified within the transport appraisal for the Strategic Transport Network are taken forward and included in an LDP. Network Rail must also be consulted on proposals which have an impact on rail infrastructure.

## Delivery Programme

The Delivery Programme is as important as the plan itself, with LDP Guidance providing further information on what should be included.

Engagement with Transport Scotland is recommended to ensure any key performance indicators established at the outset of the transport appraisal are included and monitored as the plan is implemented.

The transport appraisal should feed into the preparation of the Delivery Programme and may also be required to underpin a developer contribution strategy for the infrastructure identified. Therefore, not undertaking an appraisal, risks the outcomes of the plan being achieved.

Where the impact on the Strategic Transport Network comes directly from a development or number of developments, planning conditions or developer contributions may be sought for improvements. This should be made clear within the development plan and Delivery Programme and take cognisance of relevant planning policies, advice and guidance available at that time.

A clear route to delivery should be identified for all sites and proposals, with the Delivery Programme identifying what infrastructure is required, when it is to be delivered and by whom, including details on timing, phasing and cost, and any

contribution mechanism or other funding stream. It is vital that consideration be given to viability to ensure that the site and the spatial strategy are deliverable.

It is noted that the delivery and performance of development plans is not the sole responsibility of the planning authorities. Discussions between the planning authority, developers, Transport Scotland (where appropriate), relevant Regional Transport Partnerships and other key stakeholders (for example public transport operators) should be undertaken to agree the necessary requirements. The latest guidance on developer obligations should also be consulted.

Further assessment will be required before any strategic infrastructure can be confirmed as viable. This should follow the relevant business case, DMRB and PACE processes and other guidance where applicable.

In accordance with LDP Guidance, land should only be safeguarded for new trunk roads, rail and ferry infrastructure where approved by Transport Scotland and where it has a clear funding and delivery pathway identified and agreed in the Delivery Programme.

## Resources and Timescales

It is recognised that undertaking a transport appraisal may be time-consuming, subject to the appraisal level and may require additional resources. This should be factored into any development plan preparation timetable to ensure the appraisal is completed in sufficient time to inform the Proposed Plan.

Planning authorities are encouraged to use existing relevant evidence, where appropriate, to assist in minimising timescales and resources. Nonetheless, following the approach set out within this Guidance will ensure potential areas of difficulty or conflict will be fully examined before critical decisions are taken.

Transport Scotland will offer advice on appraisal and modelling tools and also feedback and comment on proposals as they evolve through engagement with planning authorities at each stage of preparation of development plans. This will contribute to keeping appraisals proportionate and associated resources and timescales to a minimum. Modelling work may also be required to be audited by

Transport Scotland consultants, and this should be factored into appraisal preparation. There may be circumstances where developer-led assessments, which have been appropriately audited, can feed into the DPTAG appraisal.

## Development Management

[Planning Circular 3/2022: Development Management Procedures](#) provides guidance on the procedures governing applications for planning permission and an overview of the development management system.

Network Rail is responsible for owning, operating, maintaining and developing rail infrastructure. Developers must therefore consult Network Rail separately on planning applications which have an impact on rail infrastructure.

Transport Scotland is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of the trunk road network and ensures that the interests of all users are protected whilst at the same time addressing climate change through sustainable practices and policies and supporting essential economic development. Transport Scotland's role in development management is outlined in [Transport Assessment Guidance](#).

The planning system seeks to minimise the occurrence of development coming forward at the Development Management stage that is contrary to the development plan or has not been adequately appraised during the preparation of LDPs.

For a proposed development consistent with an adopted LDP that has been appraised using the methodology outlined in this Guidance, any significant and cumulative transport issues should have already been identified, enabling any developer contribution or infrastructure delivery requirement to be clearly known and understood. It is considered that the development management process will be smoother if any cumulative mitigation is identified in the transport appraisal and LDP, enabling this to be understood prior to the submission of an application.

## Transport Assessment

Transport Assessment is the process of defining transport proposals and designs based on specific proposals for development or infrastructure. It is at this stage that a more detailed assessment of travel demand on local and strategic networks as required, can be determined and proposed transport solutions can be finalised in a comprehensive manner. The Transport Assessment is intended to quantify the impact of development(s) and demonstrate, through the application of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, and by employing a range of measures, how those impacts can be effectively mitigated or managed.

The Transport Assessment should be undertaken at planning application stage and is not a requirement of the LDP or transport appraisal, however existing assessments may provide information that will be useful to inform the appraisal. It is noted that Transport Scotland is not seeking individual/local site mitigation as part of the transport appraisal; this is considered at development management stage. Early engagement with Transport Scotland is recommended to confirm requirements, and planning authorities should allocate resources for this accordingly.

Detailed information on conducting a Transport Assessment can be found in the [Transport Assessment Guidance](#) on Transport Scotland's website.

## Further Guidance and Information

### Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

Mitigation measures can be specific to a particular mode, or they can be more broadly applied. Planning authorities should recognise the role of the hierarchy of modes in contributing towards their statutory duty to promote sustainable development. Additionally, planning authorities should take cognisance of the roles different modes have in contributing to behaviour change and the achievement of wider objectives such as eradicating child poverty, growing the economy, tackling the climate emergency and providing high quality and sustainable public services.

### Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

Walking and wheeling are the most sustainable modes and require relatively little investment to make attractive, particularly if planned and designed into a new development from the outset. Planning can encourage walking and wheeling to become the prime mode for shorter journeys through arranging land uses, utilising urban design and encouraging specific schemes, such as those developed under the Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets or Safe Routes to Schools initiatives.

All cycling infrastructure should reflect the local surroundings and the requirements of residents and transport users. If cycling is to be a realistic choice of travel mode, plans for active travel infrastructure need to be incorporated into development design. Consideration should be given to bicycle storage and cycle parking at new and refurbished developments.

Walking, wheeling and cycling improvements should be installed as soon as possible.

Walking, wheeling and cycling improvements could include creating links and removal of barriers (for example road crossings / bridges). New development proposals should be designed in a way that enables connectivity to surrounding areas. Attention should be given to the development of safe, easy and direct key

routes within neighbourhoods, villages, town and city centres, particularly in the context of the principles of local living and 20-minute neighbourhoods. Connecting strategic and local routes will enable connectivity to schools, higher education establishments and hospitals, so they are accessible to all.

Canals also have a role to play in active travel routes and tourism and plans should support their regeneration. Plans should consider the need for improved transport interchanges to support new development, where the existing infrastructure is inadequate.

## Public Transport

The quality and affordability of public transport - principally bus and rail - should be taken into account if modal shift from private vehicles is to be achieved.

A change in mode can be encouraged through, for example:

- Ensuring that new developments are well served by a range of information on modes available including walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.
- High quality infrastructure, for example multimodal / mobility hubs, transport interchanges, quality of vehicles, waiting and cycle storage areas.
- Integration of developments with walking, wheeling and cycling networks, mobility hubs schemes and existing or new rail stations.
- Rail infrastructure or service improvements in high demand corridors.
- Bus, taxi and cycle priority measures on main public transport corridors.
- Demand responsive services to fill gaps in public transport coverage.

Where public transport services required to serve a new development cannot be provided commercially, a contribution from the developer towards an agreed level of service may be appropriate. Discussions between the planning authority, public transport providers, developers, Transport Scotland where appropriate, and relevant Regional Transport Partnerships should be undertaken at an early stage in the planning process to determine how this will be delivered. In developments requiring



a new service, this should be instated as early as possible in the build out, such that sustainable habits are embedded from the outset.

Where disused rail lines have a reasonable prospect of being reused for public transport these should be considered for preserving through the development plan. Consideration should also be given to their potential for active travel / green networks.

## Mobility Hubs

STPR2 identified mobility hubs as a place where different types of transport modes and services come together to provide seamless, accessible and sustainable travel options, with the broader characteristics of mobility hubs explored further in [Mobility Hubs Guidance](#) produced by CoMoUK. Development plans have an important role in supporting the development of mobility hubs. Careful consideration should be given to where these can be promoted, along with the services and communities they can support, whilst improving the public realm. Where practicable, they should seek to integrate a range of public and sustainable transport modes, such as bus and rail, Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), taxis, walking and wheeling networks, cycle parking and/ or bike hire, e-bikes and EV car charging.

## Freight

The effective movement of goods is essential for trade and sustainable economic growth and should be considered as appropriate during plan preparation. Plans should locate land for economic development that generates significant freight movements on sites accessible to suitable railheads, harbours or the strategic road network.

Planning authorities and other stakeholders, as appropriate, should work together to address planning and transport issues relating to the movement of freight. Where appropriate, plans should identify suitable locations for new rest and welfare facilities for HGV drivers, HGV charging facilities and new or expanded rail freight interchanges to support increased movement of freight by rail. Facilities allowing the transfer of freight from road to rail or water should also be considered.

Developers and planning authorities are expected to consider the impact of future developments on existing ferry services, as part of their appraisal of impacts on the Strategic Transport Network, and costs to mitigate any such impacts should be factored in by developers. The refreshed Community Needs Assessments will provide evidence to planning authorities and developers to be taken into account when making and approving such development plans and planning proposals.

In some cases, privately chartered vessels are used to provide more capacity or to deliver bulk or specialist cargos. There are also small volumes of freight being moved by air and growing interest in new options such as using drones to deliver small but vital loads such as medical supplies.

## Taxis and Shared Transport

Sharing transport through taxi sharing, car sharing schemes and car clubs can be a more sustainable way to travel than a single occupancy private vehicle. In turn, this can lower congestion on the road network, whilst reducing greenhouse gas and noise emissions from private vehicle trips.

There are currently no standards relating to the minimum requirements for shared transport in new developments. However, to promote the sustainability of new developments, planning authorities should recognise the benefits of shared transport opportunities to aid in the delivery of more people-focused developments.

## Private Car

Plans should consider identifying very accessible locations, in built up areas which could support low / no car parking in new developments, taking account of access by active and sustainable modes, type of development and local car ownership levels.

It is accepted that there will always be circumstances where cars have a role in providing for the transport needs of people or communities, including for those who rely on car use due to physical impairments. Planning authorities should consider how best to manage this demand in their area through an appropriate combination of

measures to ensure that traffic from new development is balanced and contributes to the sustainability of that development.

## Electric Vehicles / Charging

Whilst private electric vehicles represent the bottom tier of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, shared and public transport vehicles, for example buses, are increasingly electrically charged and charging provision is an important consideration to support the roll out of electric vehicles.

Development plans have a role in supporting the efficient roll-out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure by identifying potential locations for charging hubs, especially to support rural communities. Careful consideration should be given to where these are located, ensuring the best use of renewables and the electricity network and synergy with existing services and amenities where practicable. Electric vehicle forecourts are likely to become more prominent and preference should be given to the conversion and re-use of petrol stations for this use.

## Parking

Car parking provision in new developments can have a direct influence on travel behaviour. A place-based approach to car parking provision should be taken, which aims to:

- Use appropriate design to ensure that parked cars do not dominate new places.
- Promote the NTS2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy with access to developments by sustainable modes promoted and provided over car access. New developments should avoid repeating patterns of built-in car dependence through, for example, location choice, design, layout and provision of alternative modes.
- Ensure that provision responds to the local context, including public transport accessibility and walkability.
- Provide the lowest level of car parking appropriate in each location, with the aim of reducing reliance on the private car, recognising that what is appropriate will vary from place to place.

- Ensure that disabled people are not disadvantaged by decisions on parking provision.
- Support well designed low / no car parking in very accessible areas.

In deciding on appropriate levels of car parking, planning authorities should be driven by the principle of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, reducing reliance on the private car, and supporting a modal shift to sustainable travel which will facilitate a reduction in car use. In some locations it may be appropriate to set maximum levels of parking, however these should not be targets. Planning authorities may also consider reallocating under-used car parks for another use and should support attempts to carefully reduce parking provision in areas where other options are available.

The [Transport \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#) also provides local authorities with discretionary powers to set up workplace parking licensing (WPL) schemes. It is noted that the Scottish Government supports WPL as a tool to reduce car journeys and emissions; implementation decisions sit with local authorities.

## Further Information

Further sources of information and details of data sets that can be utilised to support the preparation of an Evidence Report and transport appraisal are set out in the Local Development Plan Evidence Report: Transport Scotland Baseline Information Guidance sent to all authorities. A link can be sent on request.

## Contacts

Transport Scotland welcomes greater collaboration and engagement in the planning system. For development plan related queries please contact:

[TSDevelopmentPlan@transport.gov.scot](mailto:TSDevelopmentPlan@transport.gov.scot)



**TRANSPORT  
SCOTLAND**

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