Bristol City Council's response to Inspectors' matters, issues and questions

Matter 11: Transport and Accessibility

This statement sets out the council's response to the Inspectors' matters, issues and questions regarding transport and accessibility matters.

Council's introduction

The Inspectors' questions are shown below in **bold italics** with a border, following any preamble to the question also in **bold italics**. The council's responses are shown in normal typeface below the Inspector's questions.

Suggested main modifications arising from the Inspectors' questions are set out in grey tint boxes.

Responses to Inspectors' questions

Issue 11.1: Whether policies relating to transport and accessibility are justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Policy T1: Development and transport principles

> *Q11.1: Is policy T1 justified, consistent with national policy and effective? In particular:*
> *a)   Policy T1 states that developments should assist in reducing carbon emissions. Does the wording of the policy clearly outline the requirements that should be delivered to provide certainty for future decision makers?*

Council's response

1. The policy sets out an appropriate approach to the location, design and consideration of proposals for development which aims to locate development where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved which minimise the need to travel and maximise opportunities for sustainable forms of transport. This is consistent with paragraph 105 of the NPPF.

2. This approach of locating development where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved builds on the existing approach set out in Policy BCS10: Transport and Access Improvements contained within the existing local plan (Core Strategy (DPD001)). The inclusion of the text "assist in reducing carbon emission" is not intended to be a requirement associated with this specific policy rather a means to highlight the associated benefit of developing in sustainable locations which could help towards achieving the goals set out in the One City Climate Strategy. This approach is considered to be in accordance with paragraph 105 of the NPPF.

3. Policy NZC1: Climate change, sustainable design and construction requires development proposals to consider climate adaptation and mitigation from the start of the design process to ensure the best outcome. In order to demonstrate compliance with this policy, Sustainability Statements proportionate to the scale of development proposed should be submitted with planning applications.

Q11.1 b) Under the section 'safer streets', it is stated that developments should 'reduce as far as possible the negative impacts of vehicles such as excessive volumes, fumes, and noise'. Is this requirement consistent with the aims of the NPPF, which seeks to ensure that developments do not cause unacceptable harm?

Council's response

4. The text contained within the section "*safer streets*" is considered to be consistent with the NPPF. The policy wording here largely reflects the existing wording contained within Policy BCS10: Transport and Access Improvements (DPD001). The aim of the policy text "reduce as far as possible the negative impacts of vehicles such as excessive volumes, fumes, and noise" is to aid the creation and use of safer streets for walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport which in turn should reduce pollution.

5. This is consistent with the approach set out in the NPPF, in particular in relation to the following:

- Paragraph 92 which states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social inclusion, are safe and accessible and enable and support healthy lifestyles.

- Paragraph 105 which states that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes and further states that it can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health.

Q11.1 c) Policy T1 also states that the 'movement needs of disabled people should be considered'. Does this wording provide sufficient clarity for future decisionmakers in respect of such matters given that 'should' might not be seen as definitive and 'consideration' does not necessarily mean that it will be a determining factor?

Council's response

6. The use of "*should*" is consistent with the text set out in paragraph 112 of the NPPF "Within this context, applications for development should: b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport".

7. This issue is also addressed in the City Council's response to PQ11 (Bristol City Council's response to Inspectors' Document IN2).

Policy T2: Transport infrastructure improvements

Q11.2: The answer to PQ139 lists several items of infrastructure that are at stages such as 'outline business case' or 'in development'. Do these statuses provide certainty that the objectives of the policy would be delivered over the plan period?

Council's response

8. The statuses specified in PQ139 show the progress in terms of the delivery of schemes contained within transport strategies and plans.

9. In line with Treasury guidance set out in the 'Green Book' government funded infrastructure improvements are required to go through a robust business case assessment to test the strategic, economic, financial, commercial and management case for investment.

10. This process applies to the list of schemes outlined in PQ139.

11. It is not possible to say with absolute certainty that these projects will be delivered, as that would be pre-judging the business case process. That said, these projects are firmly established in local plans and policy -including the statutory Local Transport Plan - and have associated funding for development and/or delivery.

12. To give an example, the A4 Portway project aims to improve sustainable transport links into the city centre. It would be highly unlikely the 'do nothing' scenario would be the outcome of the business case process given the weight of evidence and policy in favour of improving conditions for transport users.

13. The business case process may adjust the approach to delivering the policy, but it is highly unlikely to fatally undermine it.

14. Progress is being made towards the delivery of most of these schemes, and it is anticipated that they will be implemented within the plan period.

Q11.3: To what extent would the delivery of the infrastructure identified in the answer to PQ139 are all necessary to deliver the objective of the policy?

Council's response

15. Policy T2 sets out support for the delivery of the planned improvement of transport infrastructure in Bristol.

16. Delivery would complement existing provision and optimise the opportunity for occupiers of the development proposed in the local plan to use sustainable means of transport. Development within Bristol is expected to be low car and sustainable in nature wherever possible, limiting the impact of additional trips. Investment in sustainable transport infrastructure is the appropriate response to increasing trip numbers.

Policy T2A: Protected transport and movement routes

Q11.4: What evidence justifies the identification of all the safeguarded areas and would the potential safeguarding of land over the plan period create a policy that would be clear, justified and consistent with Paragraph 35 of the NPPF?

Council's response

17. The transport safeguarding contained within the existing local plan was reviewed in conjunction with transport colleagues at the City Council and reflects planned and potential proposals which have a significant prospect of delivery. This review considered the status of schemes and the content of transport strategies, programmes and plans.

18. Bristol Local Plan transport designations can be viewed on the Policies Map; the designations include:

- Safeguarded Transport Links:
    - Avonmouth Way Extension
    - Junction Improvements A37/A4174
    - A4 Bath Road Corridor Scheme
    - South Bristol Link
- Rail Infrastructure:
    - St Philips Marsh Depot
    - Barrow Road Refuse Transfer Station (north)
    - Barrow Road Refuse Transfer Station (south)
    - East Depot, St Annes
    - Pylle Hill Sidings
    - St Andrews Road
    - Chittening Industrial Estate
    - Kingsland Road Sidings
    - Lockleaze Station Access
    - Ashton Gate Station

19. The process to identify land safeguarded for rail infrastructure was informed by discussions with Network Rail.

20. The policy approach is considered to be consistent with paragraph 35 of the NPPF.

Q11.5: How would an assessment of whether a facility is no longer required be carried out?

Council's response

21. An assessment of whether a transport facility is no longer required could be undertaken by the provision of evidence from operators (and other relevant stakeholders) that they did not require the facility in order to provide transport services for the local network.

22. The majority of the safeguarded rail sites are owned by Network Rail and therefore any proposed land disposal for non public transport use will be subject to regulatory procedures.

Policy T3A: Transport development management

Q11.6: The NPPF, at Paragraph 111, requires that developments do not unacceptably erode highway safety and Policy T3A states that new developments should secure low vehicle speeds. Would it always be

necessary for development to secure low vehicle speeds to be acceptable in safety terms?

Council's response

23. Road safety is something that the City Council considers on a case by case basis with vehicle speed within Bristol's own highway authority area being one of the considerations.

24. To highlight the emphasis on safety, the following modification has been included in the Schedule of Suggested Main Modifications (EXA002) for modification to be made to the Policy Text of Policy T3A:

> "Development should not give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions and will be expected to provide:
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> > i. Safe and adequate access for all sections of the community within the development and onto the highway network including designs which include permeability for sustainable modes of travel and secure ~~low~~ safe vehicle speeds;" (Policy T3A: Transport development management, Policy Text, p.144).

Q11.7: Proposals should include a Transport Assessment (TA) in instances where the 'development is likely to have a significant traffic impact'. Is this requirement clearly articulated to explain to provide certainty to future decision-makers and developers the instances in which a TA would be needed?

Council's response

25. This is the same approach as contained within existing Policy DM23: Transport Development Management (DPD002).

26. The Transport Development Management Guide (TDMG) contains guidance in respect of Transport Assessments which includes an assessment threshold table which shows the likely assessment requirement for developments specified by use class and size. The explanatory text in paragraph 10.30 states that guidance on the preparation of Transport Assessments and Statements can be found in the TDMG.

Q11.8: What is the status of the Council's Transport Development Management Guidance, how has it been derived and what does it seek to achieve?

Council's response

27. The status of the TDMG is local guidance.

28. It forms one part of a suite of documents which developers are required to be familiar with. The TDMG is written in conjunction with and in acknowledgement of the West of England Joint Local Transport Plan, the Bristol Transport Strategy, the Bristol Local Plan, as well as the City Centre Framework, the Temple Quarter Spatial Framework and the Urban Living Supplementary Planning Document.

29. The TDMG has been established to provide clear guidance for developers on the TDM expectations for the assessment and delivery of development, and what this means for transport and connectivity at all stages of the planning process.

30. It seeks to make sure the planning process prioritises and promotes healthy environments and lifestyles for existing and future citizens.

31. The Transport Development Management Guidance (TDMG)[1] is of three parts. The first outlines relevant adopted planning policies and strategic background to TDM decision making – pulling together relevant local and national policies and corporate priorities.

32. The second part outlines Bristol City Council's processes related to assessing planning applications, for example what should support a planning application, and how to engage in the post-permission (highway agreement) processes.

33. The third part is technical guidance, bringing together nationally recognised road design standards and urban design principles. It was put together over several years, consulted extensively with internal colleagues in the transport, highways, design and planning teams.

34. The guidance purely replicates existing guidance or nationally recognised technical guidance, including Manual for Streets, DMRB, CIHT guidance documents and Local Transport Notes, so did not depart from any existing practices.

Policy T4A: Parking, servicing and the provision of infrastructure for electric vehicles

Policy T4A covers, amongst other points, the provision of electric vehicle charging points. It is understood from the answer to PQ143 that the intention is for the policy to have a greater effect than the relevant Building Regulations, such as providing charging facilities in on-street parking spaces. Policy T4A covers car parking provision in accordance with the Transport SPD.

Q11.9: As locations, such as on-street spaces, may be outside of the control of the developer is this policy justified?

Council's response

35. Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) provision is contained within Building Regulations Part S, but only where this applies to parking spaces within the building curtilage. However, there is no requirement under Building Regulations to install EVCPs for on-street parking where they will form part of a new adopted highway. Many planning applications for new housing developments create new highways and rely on the provision of on-street parking, rather than on-plot parking.

36 BCC do not discourage on-street car parking provision, as this provides flexibility for users, a more flexible and efficient use of land, and provides potential to reallocate road-space should reliance on private vehicles reduce, as sustainable transport provision improves. However, the burden of on-street EVCP provision falls on Highway Authorities, and it is not within the ability for the Council to install new infrastructure for new development without additional resource to do so.

37. It is therefore proposed that developers should make provision for on-street EVCPs for new on-street parking within new highways directly associated with their development. Rather than an arbitrary numerical standard to be met across each development, it is considered more appropriate for developers to make a contribution

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[1] [BCC Transport Development Management Guidance](#)

towards local EVCP infrastructure, and this will be calculated per on-street (adopted highway) parking space proposed. The EVCPs would then be installed by the Council as part of a wider EVCP strategy. The on-street provision will support any off-street / on-plot parking implemented by the developer.