



Central Bedfordshire Council

**Travel Plans &
Transport Assessments**

Revised – June 2012

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

This guidance document sets out Central Bedfordshire Council's requirements for Travel Plans and identifies when they are required in support of a planning application.

It is also intended for use by existing organisations who, as a result of restructuring or relocation, wish to draw up a Travel Plan to facilitate more efficient and sustainable working practices.

This document will ensure that all new developments across Central Bedfordshire adequately cater for and support sustainable transport by making full use of current bus and rail routes, identifying and improving cycle routes and cycle parking facilities, promoting more sustainable car use and encouraging and providing for pedestrians.

This will be supported through infrastructure improvements and the guidance will outline the most appropriate way forward with regard to obtaining the necessary contributions for the provision of this infrastructure.

1.2 RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

This document interprets both national and local guidance on travel planning to produce an 'all-in-one' reference document for the development and delivery of Travel Plans.

According to the Department for Transport's guidelines on "Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process" (April 2009), **"travel plans have become an integral element in the planning process. They are critical to ensure that the use of sustainable modes is maximised and the finite capacity of the transport network is used effectively."**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in March 2012, reiterated the importance of Travel Plans as a key tool in facilitating the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people and replaces the former planning guidance issued under Planning Policy Guidance note 13 (PPG13).

1.3 WHAT IS A TRAVEL PLAN?

A Travel Plan is a long-term site management strategy designed to promote access to/from a particular site or area by sustainable modes of transport and to facilitate travel choice.

Travel plans are unique and specific to each development site, but guided by a framework of common principles and components. They must identify an individual

package of measures that can be applied at that location to ensure accessibility and encourage an increased use of more sustainable modes of travel – walking, cycling, motorcycling, public transport and car sharing. A robust travel plan will reduce the amount of car traffic generated by a development, reducing the pressure on the surrounding road network and, in some cases, enabling increased development at a reduced cost.

“Travel plans focus on achieving the lowest practical level of single occupancy vehicle trips to or from a site and widening the use of other travel modes.”
(DfT/DCLG,2009:18)

1.3.1 Why are travel plans required in Central Bedfordshire?

Travel plans are required to support a number of local and national policy objectives aimed at:

- Reducing pressure on highway capacity, particularly at peak times - allowing a greater volume of development than would be the case without a travel plan.
- Reducing the cost of works on the highway or other transport infrastructure
- Cutting carbon emissions and their contribution to climate change
- Reducing road danger and protecting vulnerable road users
- Improving local air quality
- Encouraging more active travel, with gains for health
- Enabling children to travel independently
- Reducing noise pollution
- Reducing business and logistics costs including parking and fleet management
- Improving staff morale in the targeted organisation
- Creating more attractive and liveable neighbourhoods.
- Increasing business profitability and functionality of the development through
- Increased accessibility and reduced congestion
- Making development more viable by reducing the amount of upfront expenditure on measures if it can be proven during the operation of the development that sustainable travel patterns can be delivered without additional investment in capacity or alternatives

While a Travel Plan does not change the way people travel, it does facilitate opportunities for people to use other forms of travel and thus effect a reduction in single occupancy car use.

Travel Plans should be regarded as a ‘living manual’ that can be updated and changed as required. It is likely that the needs of a particular site and its users will change over time and as such the Travel Plan document should be able to change with the site. In this way, Travel Plans will remain up-to-date and therefore effective

in enabling modal shift from single occupancy car use to sustainable forms of transport.

There are several key types of Travel Plan and although their basic aims are the same, they differ in the approach that they take. The main Travel Plans are:

- Site Specific Travel Plans, e.g. workplace or school travel plans.
- Zonal and Area-Wide Travel Plans
- Residential Travel Plans.

Travel Plans are most effective when implemented early in the planning process as they can be used to assess and mitigate the impact of the expected travel to/from a site. However, a Travel Plan should be primarily designed for the people who use the site and who would benefit from improved travel options. This is an important aspect of Travel Planning and should be kept at the forefront during planning discussions.

1.4 WHAT IS A TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT?

A Transport Assessment (TA) is a written statement provided by an applicant as part of an application for planning permission for larger developments.

TAs consider the impact of a proposed development on all modes of transport and require developers to identify what measures will be taken to deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the scheme and improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that all developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment.

1.4.1 Identifying the need for a Transport Assessment

In most cases the need for a TA will be decided by the Council on the basis of the information supplied by the applicant during the initial pre-application discussions.

However, even when the floor space threshold¹ is not reached, a TA may be required where the development may have a significant transport impact due to it being located in a sensitive area.

The thresholds are therefore for guidance only and should not be read as absolutes. Each development will be considered on the basis of its transport impact and developers are encouraged to have early pre-application discussions with the Council if they are in any doubt about the need for a TA.

¹ A full list of thresholds can be found in section 2.2 of this document.

The requirement for a TA will largely be determined on the basis of the proposed floorspace (or increase in floorspace), which is used as a proxy for the likely trip generation of a development. If a development is not within one of the land-use categories as set out in paragraph 2.2 of this document, or a developer is unsure whether a TA is required, a decision will be made by the Council on the basis of any other information which can be supplied by the developer which may inform the decision.

1.4.2 Relationship between Travel Plans and Transport Assessments

There is a clear relationship between the travel plan and the transport assessment. The TA provides detail on the transport conditions and likely impact of development, and the TP is a long term strategy to mitigate against any adverse impacts and maximise the potential for achieving sustainable transport behaviour.

It is therefore necessary that the TA and TP be written in parallel and that the Council is satisfied that the TP measures and mechanisms will achieve the necessary mitigation.

1.4.3 Transport Statements

Although a formal TA is generally not required for developments which do not exceed the thresholds, the transport impacts of smaller developments will be assessed as part of the planning decision.

For all trip-generating developments, except for very small developments, the Council will be looking for evidence that the developer has taken account of a range of transport and traffic issues. For smaller developments, this should be set out in the form of a Transport Statement.

A Transport Statement will have less detail than a Transport Assessment but should set out the transport issues relating to a proposed development site and the details of the development proposals, including any impacts on existing transport conditions in the area. Like a Transport Assessment, it will be used as the basis for preparing a Travel Plan Statement.

Further details on the content of Transport Statements is set out in Chapter 3 of the DfT's Guidance on Transport Assessment.

1.4.4 Travel Plan Statements

Small applications may not justify a full Travel Plan. Instead, a Travel Plan Statement can deal with any issues raised in the Transport Statement.

These statements are likely to be narrower than a full Travel Plan and will contain less detail. As a minimum, the following areas should be covered:

- **Objectives** - usually derived from analysis included in the Transport Statement.
- **Site audit** - a description of the site, its existing and proposed use, the number of residents, employees, visitors, number of car parking spaces.
- **Accessibility assessment** - an assessment of the site's travel opportunities by all modes and existing travel/transport infrastructure.
- **Package of measures** - explanation of the proposed package of Travel Plan measures to e.g. a new footway, car park management, discounted bus tickets for residents/employees, discounts for cycling equipment, provision of staff showers on site etc.
- **Action Plan** - for delivery of the proposed measures, including timescales for delivery of each measure and lead contacts for the delivery of each.
- **Monitoring strategy and modal share targets** – including short/medium/long term targets to reduce Single Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) travel and increase travel by walking, cycling, car-sharing and public transport. It would also confirm details of a Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) and set out how performance of the TPS will be monitored – eg. Annual surveys.

1.4.5 How will the Transport Assessment be used?

The Council will use the information provided in the TA to make an assessment of the transport impact of the development. This assessment will be used to assist in determining the planning application, but will not be the sole determinant.

All relevant policies will be taken into account in determining the application, but for large trip generating developments the transport impact will be a major consideration.

The TA is not the applicants' 'final say' on what they are proposing, and if the Council decides that the development could be made more acceptable it will suggest amendments to the proposals. These could include scaling down the development; reducing the parking provision to influence modal split; providing new or improved public transport; or providing new or improved pedestrian, cycle, or, in exceptional circumstances, highway facilities.

In certain cases the Council will seek financial contributions from the applicant through Section 106 agreements or planning conditions to fund new or improved public transport services, and/or pedestrian and cycle facilities or other measures to reduce the modal share of the private car.

The Council's Supplementary Planning Document on Planning Obligations sets this out in more detail.

1.4.6 Preparing a Transport Assessment

When a Transport Assessment is required, the Council can provide advice on appropriate methods to be used for the various assessments of transport impact, and will co-operate in providing any information required for the TA which it has at its disposal. However, the production of the TA is the responsibility of the developer or their agent, and not the Council.

In order to facilitate travel planning through development the TA should evaluate the transport aspects of the proposal, including:

- Current accessibility by all modes.
- Potential demand for all movement and likely modal split of journeys to and from the site.
- Reviewing the options for improving access in order to maximize use of sustainable modes.
- Ensure that adequate provision for sustainable travel has been incorporated in the design proposals (e.g. cycle parking area, footway connections).
- Details of how to minimise car parking levels.

The TA will form the basis of the impact assessment of the proposed development. The TA should follow a clear and logical structure and demonstrate how the application complies with the relevant Central Bedfordshire Development Plan transport policies. It should be written in plain English so that non-technical professionals can understand it, with any acronyms fully explained.

A full description of the baseline conditions / data, including when it was collected, should be included in the TA. The document should then clearly set out the analytical techniques, data sources and assumptions used to forecast future conditions/impacts on the transport network from the proposed development.

Any proposed mitigation works should, where possible, be included in the planning application. In all cases, where mitigation measures are proposed, the TA should reflect their contribution to reducing the impacts of the development.

Where additional consents are required, such as traffic orders, these should be listed. Travel Plans are an important mitigation measure, and these are discussed further in Chapter Four.

Additional guidance documents on TAs have been developed by the Department for Transport (DfT) / Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and these documents can be used as guidance when preparing a TA. The titles of the DfT / DCLG document is - Guidance on Transport Assessment (March 2007).

1.5 PARKING STANDARDS

Travel Plans are indelibly linked to local parking standards, and guidance on both parking and travel plans should be brought together to create the most suitable

environment for Travel Plan success. With reduced parking availability in both residential developments and workplaces, Travel Plan initiatives have a real chance of success.

Central Bedfordshire Council has approved a new Design Guide entitled 'Design in Central Bedfordshire – A Guide for Development', which contains a Design Supplement entitled 'Movement, Streets and Places', containing our latest design guide for parking standards.²

1.6 INTRODUCING ACCESSIBILITY

This guidance incorporates the concept of accessibility in travel planning. Improved access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need, in ways that are sustainable through improved public transport or improved access for pedestrians and cyclists can not only reduce congestion and pollution and increase safety but also promote social inclusion.

Promoting access for all is also a key aspect of the street environment as highlighted in the Manual for Streets (2007) and the Disability Discrimination Act (2005). It is a legal requirement that the street environment be accessible to everyone through wide pavements, ramped access to shops and crossing points and the removal of barriers to the free movement of pedestrians. With improved access, Travel Plans will be more effective in promoting sustainable transport.

1.7 REVIEW OF TRAVEL PLAN GUIDANCE

1.7.1 National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework - Chapter 4 Promoting Sustainable Transport.

This document states that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. New developments should take the following into account:

- *The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure.*
- *Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and*
- *Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.*

² <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/ldf/central-bedfordshire-design-guide.aspx>

The guidance states that new development should be located and designed where practical to:

- *Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies.*
- *Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities.*
- *Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones.*
- *Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.*
- *Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.*

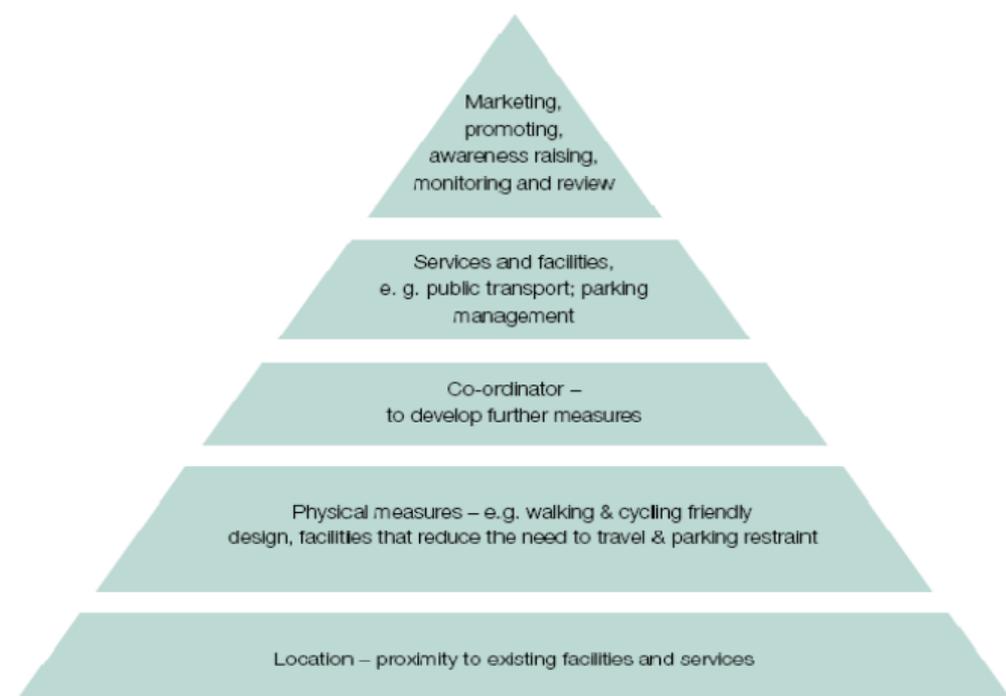
The guidance states that key tool to facilitate this will be a Travel Plan. All developments which generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a Travel Plan.

DfT ‘Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process’ (2009)

This travel planning best practice guidance *“is intended to set out best practice actions that can be taken to produce high-quality, robust travel plans”*.

The figure below provides a copy of the DfT’s Travel Plan pyramid. This pyramid illustrates the measures and actions that are used when creating a Travel Plan *“with each new layer building on the last all set within the context of the outcomes sought”*.

DfT Travel Plan pyramid



1.7.2 Local Guidance

Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3)

In addition to national guidance, Central Bedfordshire Council's Local Transport Plan – 'My Journey' - sets out how we can make transport and local services more accessible, as well as the role of 'Smarter Choices' and Travel Plans in achieving this.

This is the third such Plan to cover the area and was adopted in March 2011. The Plan sets out a vision and supporting objectives for the development of transport infrastructure and services in the period up until March 2026.

A series of Journey Purpose Strategies were produced which form the key structure of the Plan, and focus upon freight, journeys to work and access to services. These are supported by a series of modal strategies which draw out policy areas and interventions for their specific areas, which can then be applied to each of the journey purpose strategies.

These strategies in turn will then inform the development of Local Area Transport Plans. These will focus on delivering the overarching journey purpose strategies at a local level, initially for the towns of Dunstable and Houghton Regis, Leighton Linlade, Biggleswade and Sandy, and Arlesey and Stotfold.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

A new way of controlling and planning future developments was introduced in 2004. The Local Development Framework replaced Local Plans as the way development is managed as well as how our local environment and economy is protected.

The authority is currently preparing a new Development Strategy to influence development across the authority. The Development Strategy will be the main planning document for Central Bedfordshire and will set out the overarching spatial strategy and development principles for the area together with more detailed policies to help determine planning applications.

The Development Strategy will address similar issues to those in the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies in the north, but will also consider the allocation of strategic development sites.

It is anticipated that the Development Strategy will be formally adopted in 2014, and in the interim period, the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies document will guide development in the North Area (the former Mid Bedfordshire district area). In the south, the adopted Local Plan (2004) and joint Core Strategy (endorsed for Development Management purposes) will continue to set the planning context for decisions on planning applications

Planning Obligations SPD for North and South area

The Council has two Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) setting out the Council's Policy for an improved approach to negotiating and securing planning obligations associated with new development in the former Mid Bedfordshire area and South Bedfordshire areas.

It provides users of the planning service with greater transparency and certainty of what planning obligations will be sought in conjunction with planning applications for development. The SPD also gives guidance on when and how the Council will enter into planning obligations and the type of facilities and other benefits the Council expects developers to provide.

Local Validation Checklist

The Council recently revised its Local Validation Checklist (LVC) for all planning applications within Central Bedfordshire. This will be used to ensure that planning applications submitted to the Council contain all the information necessary for the application to be processed.

Different types of application need to be supported by additional information on a range of different topics in order for their impacts to be assessed thoroughly. The Validation Checklist sets out information requirements that are likely to be needed to accompany different types of application, in addition to standard forms, plans and other information that is required for all applications.

The Validation Checklist is part of a wider process. The Council provides a pre-application advice service, of which prospective applicants are encouraged to take advantage. This can be used to identify further information needs for the benefit of applicants at an early stage.

Taken together, pre-application advice with more certainty over the validation process will be a helpful service which can assist developers in achieving acceptable standards in terms of application submission and the design and environmental quality of proposals.

1.8 PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDANCE

The purpose of this guidance is to provide a consistent approach to assisting developers and their agents in preparing high quality Travel Plans that provide sustainable and long-lasting outcomes.

It should be used to inform future development and covers the whole of the Council's administrative area.

The guidance covers:

- When a Travel Plan is required, including indicative **thresholds**.

- The **procedure** for submitting and agreeing the Travel Plan.
- The scope and **contents** of a Travel Plan including setting **targets**.
- How the Travel Plan will be **assessed, monitored** and **reviewed**.
- Measures which may be taken to **enforce** delivery of Travel Plans.
- Templates and case studies to help developers and others assemble their Travel Plans.

1.9 DEVELOPING THE GUIDANCE

This guidance has been produced by Central Bedfordshire Council and is supported by the Highways Agency. Anyone with an interest in Travel Plans secured via the planning process is encouraged to use this guidance initially and refer to the contacts listed in Appendix 1 for further advice.

This Travel Plan Guidance is produced in support of its LDF policies and as part of our Local Transport Plan that was adopted in March 2011. It has also been prepared in the light of the government's best practice advice³ and will be updated at regular intervals as legislation and best practice changes. Although the guidance is intended to be freestanding, developers should also refer to the adopted and emerging development plans for the Authority, other technical guidance and the Local Transport Plan.

³ 'Good Practice Guidelines: Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process, DfT, April 2009'

2.0 WHEN IS A TRAVEL PLAN REQUIRED?

2.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Travel Plans are relevant for all types of development including residential development, and this is particularly important considering the growth areas within Central Bedfordshire

This section identifies indicative thresholds above which both Travel Plans will be required for developments in Central Bedfordshire. The following principles should be considered in addition to the indicative thresholds:

- As a general rule, **if a Transport Assessment is required, so is a Travel Plan**. Indeed a Travel Plan should be considered the ‘implementation’ part of the Transport Assessment. The scope and importance of the Travel Plan will vary depending on the development type and its location.
- Some developments may fall below the thresholds but still raise **significant travel issues** that could be addressed via a Travel Plan. This could be, for example, in an area where initiatives or targets have been adopted for the reduction of road traffic, air quality management or the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling.
- Smaller developments, which individually would fall below the threshold, but taken together with other smaller developments in the area may have a **cumulative impact** that a Travel Plan could help address.
- Smaller developments that lie within a larger development area. An example would be where outline planning permission exists for a business park which has an **area wide travel plan** (possibly a “masterplan” area). As smaller sites or plots come forward for approval of details, Travel Plans may be sought for these individual sites.
- For **mixed use development**, individual components may fall below the thresholds but the overall transport impact may require a Travel Plan.
- There may be instances where a Travel Plan can help address a particular **local problem** associated with the planning application, which might otherwise have to be refused on local traffic grounds (e.g. day nursery on a busy commuter route).
- It should not be assumed that the absence of a Travel Plan requirement removes the need for addressing **sustainable transport** issues. Measures to promote access via non-car modes may be secured without

a Travel Plan being required and secured according to our planning obligations SPD⁴.

- In order to meet pressures for additional affordable and private sector homes, meeting the latest guidance on density and effective use of brownfield land, and without comprising design and quality (e.g. Manual for Streets guidance) the residential travel plan tool must be employed in order to reduce necessary pressure on the existing road network, and to ensure that sustainable travel choices are provided from the outset for new residents.
- The thresholds given below represent a general guide and not an explicit cut off point. **Each proposal will be considered on its merits** and developers are encouraged to seek the view of the local authority at an early stage after reading this guidance and maintain a regular dialogue with them throughout the planning process.

2.2 THRESHOLDS

Travel Plans, Travel Plan Statements and Transport Assessments will be required for any development which meets or exceeds the following Gross Floor Area thresholds:

Land Use	Description of development	Size	Travel Plan Statement	Transport Assessment / Travel Plan
A1 Food retail	Retail sale of foods to the public – food superstores, supermarkets, convenience food stores.	GFA	>250<800sq.m	> 800 m ²
A1 Non-food retail	Retail sale of non-food goods to the public; but includes sandwich bars – sandwiches or other cold food purchased and consumed off the premises, internet cafes.	GFA	>800<1500sq.m	> 1,500 m ²

⁴ <http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/ldf/ldf-north-area/northldf-planning-obligations-supplementary-doc.aspx>
<http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/ldf/ldf-south-area/default.aspx>

A2 Financial and professional services	Financial services – banks, building societies and bureaux de change, professional services (other than health or medical services) – estate agents and employment agencies, other services – betting shops, principally where services are provided to visiting members of the public.	GFA	>1000<2500sq.m	> 2,500 m ²
A3 Restaurants and cafes	Restaurants and cafes – use for the sale of food for consumption on the premises, excludes internet cafes (now A1).	GFA	>300<2500sq.m	> 2,500 m ²
A4 Drinking establishments	Use as a public house, wine-bar or other drinking establishment	GFA	>300<600sq.m	> 600 m ²
A5 Hot-food takeaway	Use for the sale of hot food for consumption on or off the premises	GFA	>250<500sq.m	> 500 m ²
B1 Business	(a) Offices other than in use within Class A2 (financial and professional services) (b) research and development – laboratories, studios (c) light industry	GFA	>1500<2500sq.m	> 2,500 m ²

B2 General Industrial	General industry (other than classified as in B1)	GFA	>2500<4000sq.m	> 4,000 m ²
B8 Storage or distribution	Storage or distribution centres – wholesale warehouses, distribution centres and repositories	GFA	>3000<5000sq.m	> 5,000 m ²
C1 Hotels	Hotels, boarding houses and guest houses, development falls within this class if 'no significant element of care is provided'	Bedrooms	>75<100 bedrooms	> 100 bedrooms
C2 Residential institutions – hospitals, nursing homes	Used for the provision of residential accommodation and care to people in need of care	Beds	>30<50 beds	> 50 beds
C2 Residential institutions – residential education	Boarding schools and training centres	Students	>50<150 students	> 150 students
C2 Residential institutions – institutional hostels	Homeless shelters, accommodation for people with learning difficulties and people on probation	Residents	>250<400 residents	> 400 residents
C3 Dwelling houses	Dwellings for individuals, families or not more than six people living together as a	Dwelling unit	>50<80 units	> 80 units

	single household. Not more than six people living together includes – students or young people sharing a dwelling and small group homes for disabled or handicapped people living together in the community.			
D1 Non-residential institutions	Medical and health services – clinic and health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres and consulting rooms (not attached to the consultant’s or doctor’s house), museums, public libraries, art galleries, exhibition halls, all Schools and higher/further education facilities, training centres, places of worship, religious instruction and church halls.		All developments to submit an updated or new Travel Plan	All developments to submit an updated or new Travel Plan
D2 Assembly and leisure	Cinemas, dance and concert halls, sports halls, swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums, bingo halls and casinos, other indoor and outdoor sports	GFA	>500<1500sq.m	> 1,500 m ²

	and leisure uses not involving motorised vehicles or firearms.			
Others	For example: stadium, retail warehouse clubs, amusement arcades, laundrettes, petrol filling stations, taxi businesses, car/vehicle hire businesses and the selling and displaying of motor vehicles, nightclubs, theatres, hostels, builders' yards, garden centres, POs, travel and ticket agencies, hairdressers, funeral directors, hire shops, dry cleaners.	TBD	Discuss with appropriate highways authority	Discuss with appropriate highways authority

GFA = Gross floor area; TBD GFA = Gross Floor Area TBD = To be developed.

Other considerations for Transport Statements, Assessments and Travel Plans

	Other considerations	TS	TA/TP
1	Any development that is not in conformity with the adopted development plan		✓
2	Any development generating 30 or more two-way vehicle movements in any hour		✓
3	Any development generating 100 or more two-way vehicle movements per day		✓

4	Any development proposing 100 or more parking spaces		✓
5	Any development that is likely to increase accidents or conflicts among motorised users and non-motorised users, particularly vulnerable road users such as disabled people, elderly people and children, particularly in developments on school sites likely to increase footfall.		✓
6	Any development generating significant freight or HGV movements per day, or significant abnormal loads per year.		✓
7	Any development proposed in a location where the local transport infrastructure is inadequate – for example, substandard roads, poor pedestrian/cyclist facilities and inadequate public transport provisions.		✓
8	Any development proposed in a location within or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).		✓

TS = Transport Statement; TA = Transport Assessment; TP = Travel Plan

These thresholds offer a guide and it is anticipated that pre-application discussions will confirm the need for a Travel Plan where the size or nature of the proposal may not be specifically covered by this guidance. It is likely that a travel plan will be required if it is anticipated that a development will generate a significant amount of travel demand.

The requirement for a travel plan is therefore at the discretion of the highway authority; however unacceptable development will not necessarily be permitted because of the existence of a travel plan especially if it cannot mitigate sufficiently any overriding concerns over traffic generation⁵.

2.3 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Most new developments and changes of land use have some form of transport implication, therefore the transport aspects of development proposals need to be identified and dealt with as early as possible in the planning process.

In line with Government planning policy, Central Bedfordshire Council encourages developments which offer people the widest choice of travel options; Residential Travel Plans are an important tool in achieving this.

⁵ See Appendix 6 for more information.

A residential travel plan is a package of measures designed to reduce the number and length of car trips generated by a residential development, while also supporting more sustainable forms of travel and reducing the overall need to travel. The following points have to be considered when creating a residential travel plan.

Residential travel plans are best adopted during the design and planning phase of a new housing development as they are most likely to succeed if implemented at the earliest possible stage of planning and involve input from the developers, local authority and public transport operators.

- In order to maximise the benefits, Travel Plans should be agreed at Planning Application stage and managed by a managing agent, residents association or even Parish/Town Council (resourced at the developer's expense).
- Travel plans for large residential developments are an important tool to ensure that infrastructure meets accessibility criteria and that the implementation of walk, cycle and bus routes for instance are adequately promoted as part of a developers commitment to meeting sustainable travel targets.
- Travel Plans for large residential developments should be produced and managed by the developer (or agent) where the construction phase covers a number of years.
- Developers of all residential developments meeting or exceeding the above threshold should produce and distribute travel-specific 'Welcome Packs', to be distributed to residents upon occupation or as close as feasible.
- The packs should include information on sustainable travel specifically tailored to the development, including information on cycling, walking and public transport services and routes, useful contact numbers and discount vouchers for public transport use as part of an overall package.
- The measures used in residential travel plans should capitalise on any potential synergies with successful local authority initiatives and partnerships

The following key principles are helpful in deciding on the choice of measures for individual plans. Residential travel plans:

- Are site specific - the choice of measures determined by the opportunities and constraints offered by the site, for example, the location of existing public transport routes, local amenities and workplaces in the immediate area. Therefore the measures incorporated in a Travel Plan need to be unique to the site and not a standard approach.

- Combine 'hard measures' such as site design, infrastructure and new services with 'soft measures' for example marketing, promotion and awareness-raising among residents.
- Provide a package of initiatives in which individual measures are integrated into the design, marketing and occupation of the site rather than 'retrofitted' once the development is established. The measures should aim to achieve more sustainable travel patterns from the outset, rather than cutting car use incrementally once the residents are in occupation.
- Include measures to support walking, cycling and public transport use.
- Along with other measures parking restraint is likely to be critical to the success of the plan in reducing car use. It follows that the introduction of a travel plan should never be treated as justification for approving more generous parking: the parking level is itself an important measure in the plan.⁶

2.4 SCHOOLS

Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to working with schools to develop Travel Plans through the Council's Local Transport Plan programme. Currently, 98% of Central Bedfordshire's mainstream schools now have approved travel plans. School's Travel Plans should be updated and monitored on annual basis.

Travel Plans should be considered for both new and expanded school proposals and current experience in Bedfordshire demonstrates that with continuing trends for increased car use that a travel plan should be required under these circumstances to accompany the planning application thus promoting safe cycle and walking routes, restricts parking and car access at and around schools, and includes on-site changing and cycle storage facilities.

As with other forms of development a travel plan for a new school is an important tool to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is secured to support sustainable travel prior to construction with the behavioural measures being developed and implemented following occupation.

For all developments on school sites, a travel plan will be required to ensure that existing problems are not exacerbated by the development, increase in school numbers, changes in provision or additional footfall on the school site as a result of the development. This will ensure that measures are in place to encourage safer and sustainable travel.

This has now been adopted as policy within Central Bedfordshire's Local Transport Plan 2011-2026.

⁶ See Design Supplement 'Movement, Streets and Places' from Central Bedfordshire Council's 'Design in Central Bedfordshire – A Guide for Development'.

No.	Policy
SMoTS 1	All schools and colleges to have an annually updated travel plan in place
SMoTS 2	All new school developments and development on a school site planning applications are accompanied by travel plans as a compulsory element and that these are enforced through the planning process

Consideration should also be given to whether a Travel Plan already exists and whether it should be updated as a result of new development locally.

Developers should refer to guidance on delivering sustainable schools in order to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is provided on school sites that facilitate sustainable travel options such as bus turning areas and separate pedestrian and cycling accesses. For guidance on cycle parking requirements please refer to Central Bedfordshire’s cycle parking guidance.

2.5 AREA WIDE TRAVEL PLANS (ZONAL TRAVEL PLANS)

On large development sites with potentially a number of separate occupiers (such as a business or retail park), it is good practice to prepare a site wide Travel Plan and for new developments this will be expected. This should establish a common approach across the area. Individual occupiers should prepare their own Travel Plans within the context set by the site wide plan. This will allow individual occupiers some flexibility to develop their Travel Plans to reflect the nature of their operation.

It is also good practice for a site wide Travel Plan Co-ordinator to be appointed to monitor the success of the Travel Plan and to assist individual occupiers with the preparation and implementation of their Plans. Any lease or occupier tenancy agreement should contain firm binding legal requirements to ensure that individual occupiers meet these obligations for the implementation of plans and subsequent monitoring and review.

A Zonal Travel Plan covers a defined area and focuses on any key activities within the area that wants to implement a Travel Plan. By looking at vehicle congestion and trip generation as a whole across an area, Travel Plans become more effective as part of an overarching scheme. Small and medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) should also be included in the formulation of a strategic Travel Plan network.

Where extensions are proposed to existing business parks and industrial estates it may be more appropriate to encourage funding retrofit “shared facilities” (e.g. cycle

parking) across the wider area than insist on providing within each new unit. The Council will negotiate flexibly with developers and existing landowners on this issue.

2.6 MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT

Mixed Use sites are difficult to categorise in terms of transport impact for each individual type of land use. Developers planning mixed uses should consult the local planning authority at an early stage to determine whether a Travel Plan is likely to be required and the scope for its content. A similar approach to site wide Travel Plans is recommended.

2.7 GOODS MOVEMENTS

It is important to ensure that Travel Plans consider goods as well as people movements. This can relate to delivery and servicing arrangements for retail and industrial units as well as the potential for home deliveries.

The aim should be to promote sustainable travel as well as other key issues such as addressing social exclusion, promoting safety, minimising noise and community disturbance and visual intrusion. The Travel Plan process should also consider the use of rail or water based good movements where relevant to do so.

Travel Plans must consider both permanent and temporary goods movement i.e. permanent HGV movements such as those from waste disposal sites and temporary goods movements such as contractor's vehicles that would only occur during the construction phase of a particular development.

2.8 CONSTRUCTION

A Travel Plan should also consider the construction phase of development. This is especially important for large developments where the construction period may cover several years.

In order to minimise the impact of construction traffic it may be possible to consider ideas such as on-site recycling of materials, use of rail or waterways to move materials, and the timing of deliveries to avoid congested times of the day or minimise disturbance to neighbouring uses.

A Construction Management Plan (CMP) is a tool used to manage the amount of construction traffic generated by the development of a particular site. A CMP will outline the amount of traffic travelling to/from the site and specify what times delivery of materials will occur. The CMP governs all construction related traffic including; HGVs, LGVs, contractor vans and all cars that visit the site.

A CMP will also outline the methods for reducing the impact of construction traffic through measures such as using a minibus to pick up/collect workers.

2.9 MINERALS AND WASTE

Central Bedfordshire has a number of minerals extraction and waste disposal sites. Whenever a new proposal is being considered, the implications of employee and lorry movements to these sites will be a consideration and may require a Travel Plan to be developed.

Each proposal will be considered on its merits and will include the site excavation, use and aftercare phases.

3.0 WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE?

3.1 TYPES OF APPLICATION

Planning permission may be sought in full or outline and the end occupier(s) may or may not be known. Travel Plans need to be customised to the users of a site so it can be more difficult to prepare a Travel Plan where the end use is not known. However, even without knowledge of the end user, enough should be known about the characteristics of the proposal and its relationship with the surrounding area and under these circumstances an interim Travel plan will be expected before a site is occupied.

With regard to speculative development, the Interim Travel Plan is expected to specify measures to be implemented before development and occupation as far as possible and to include a framework and timetable for the final travel plan. The final travel plan should be prepared and implemented soon after occupation in accordance with the framework, based on surveys of the operating development.

3.2 PROCEDURE

The planning application procedure in Central Bedfordshire is illustrated in diagram 3.1. Pre-application discussion is welcomed but this guidance should be the start point.

A Travel Plan should be submitted with the Transport Assessment. The Plan should provide details of infrastructure and other measures (e.g. Travel Plan co-ordinator) to be provided as part of the development together with a timetable for their implementation. It should be clear on the objectives of the plan and should set achievable but challenging targets and have a monitoring and reporting programme.

Negotiations on the Travel Plan content will be integral with discussions on the Transport Assessment (and therefore planning application). The findings of the Transport Assessment should form the basis for setting the Travel Plan's targets and measures.

The Travel Plan will be agreed prior to planning permission being granted and secured via condition or legal agreement (see below).

In order to ensure that the Travel Plan remains relevant and is focussed on the users of a site and the agreed targets, whoever is responsible for 'managing' the Travel Plan should undertake a survey of staff, visitors and/or customers as soon as possible within six months of the site being operational. This survey information will allow the Travel Plan to be refined as part of the first year monitoring and reporting.

An annual monitoring report will normally be required for at least five years after occupancy based on repeat survey work. This monitoring will enable the Travel Plan to be reviewed and refocused if necessary.

3.3 SECURING THE TRAVEL PLAN – PLANNING CONDITION OR LEGAL AGREEMENT?

The Travel Plan will be secured either through a planning **condition** or by **legal agreement**. In both cases the Travel Plan should be agreed prior to a site being occupied (in full or interim).

A planning condition will normally be discharged before the development is occupied, while a legal agreement is better suited to implementing measures over a period of time (i.e. after the development is occupied). Legal agreements are also the mechanism used for paying monies to the planning and highway authority (e.g. that could contribute towards delivering Travel Plan objectives).

In general:

- A condition may be used to secure a Travel Plan. Other conditions may be used to secure specific “hard” infrastructure.
- A legal agreement may be used to secure a Travel Plan as well as specifying “hard” and “soft” Travel Plan measures.
- The Travel Plan itself is a separate document and should draw together all “hard” and “soft” measures in one document even though they may be secured by condition or legal agreement.

There is no single preferred method of securing the Travel Plan or its contents and each case will be considered on its merits. As a general guide the larger and more complex a development, the more likely a legal agreement will be required.

Examples - Travel Plan elements secured by condition are:

- Car parking provision, including specifying the number, size and management of parking provision e.g. disabled parking, charging regimes.
- Restrictions on vehicle access to/from the site.
- Cycle infrastructure.
- Pedestrian infrastructure.
- Provision for public transport, such as bus stops and lay-bys.
- Provision of information boards etc.
- Arrangements for deliveries.
- New or improved junction and road layouts.

Examples - Travel Plan elements secured by legal agreement are shown below. Note that these are outcome-based targets showing an ongoing commitment:

- Appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator.
- Off-site parking arrangements.
- Provision of car sharing schemes.
- Improvements to a cycle or pedestrian route which goes near the site.
- Improvement to public transport services.

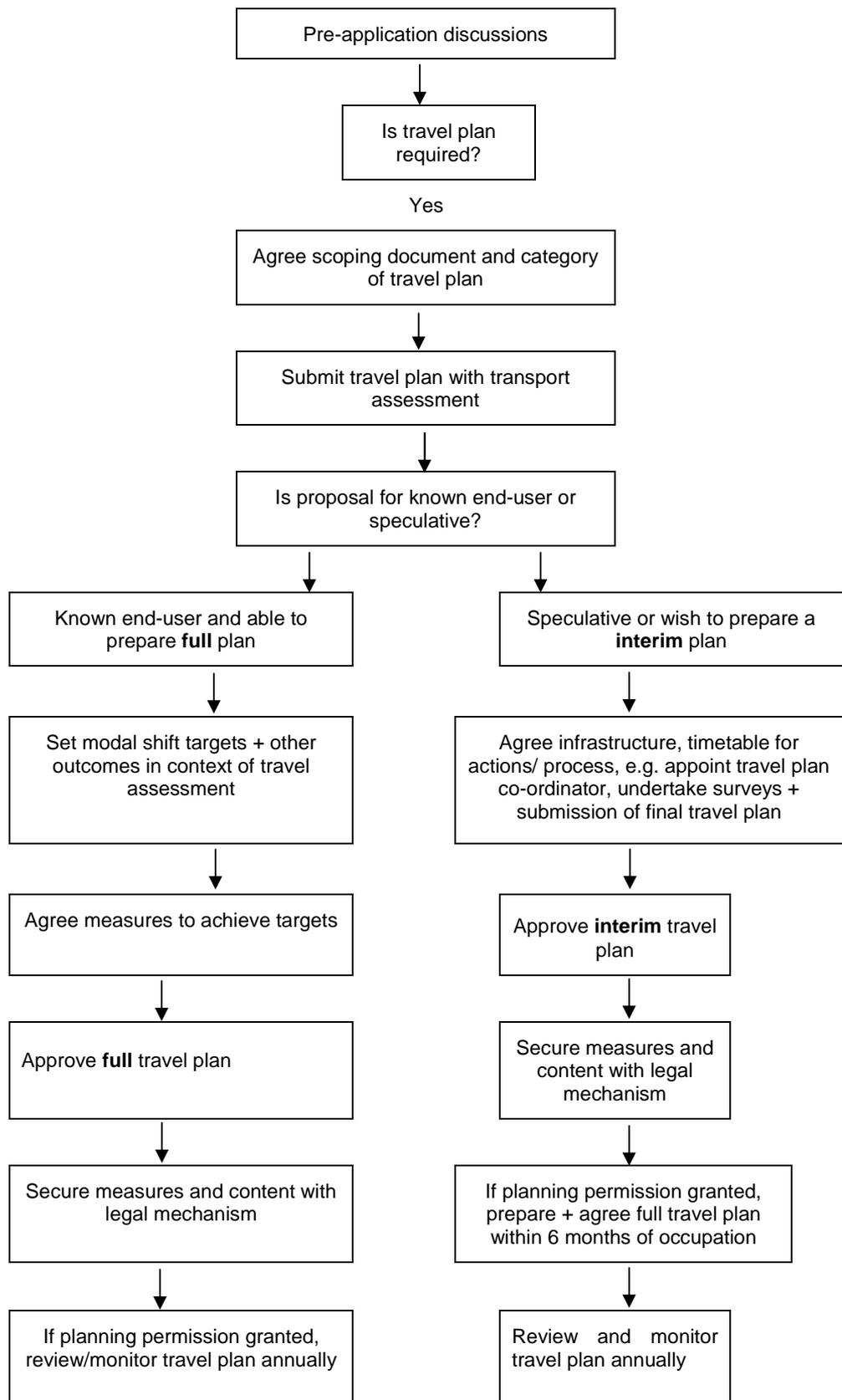
- Park and ride contributions.
- Provision of works bus or shuttle bus.
- Controlled parking zone.
- Programme for monitoring and review.
- Requirement for triggered payments if targets not met.

Legal advice will be required when drafting a legal agreement and the Travel Plan can be attached as an annex to the legal agreement. Where a legal agreement is required, the Planning and Highway Authorities will seek assurance that legal fees will be covered by the developer.

Over time, standard condition and legal agreement wording will become common place. Developers are therefore advised to seek the views of the local authority before drafting conditions or legal agreements related to Travel Plans.

Examples of wording associated with legal agreements are to be found in Appendix 3.

3.4 TRAVEL PLAN PROCESS



4.0 WHAT SHOULD GO IN A TRAVEL PLAN?

4.1 TRAVEL PLAN FORMAT

A Travel Plan should consist of a package of measures focussed on agreed targets designed to promote alternatives to car use. Travel Plans should also include a monitoring programme in order to demonstrate how well the targets are being met.

It is important that a Travel Plan includes measures that provide both incentives to use alternative modes of transport as well as disincentives to car use.

The appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator (TPC) is regarded as crucial in driving the Travel Plan forward and maintaining momentum. Without a nominated individual working to achieve the objectives of the Travel Plan, it is unlikely that the plan will be successful.

As more TPCs are appointed across Central Bedfordshire, there are likely to be benefits in terms of networking and in sharing the cost of promotional activities.

The contact details for the TPC should be provided to the local authority before the Travel Plan is approved; and in the case of speculative development, a clear timetable for the 'passing on' of responsibility should be clearly documented. Indications of whether the TPC will be an on-site position should also be given.

The role of a TPC can be funded in the following ways:

- Performance obligations
- Management company – privately financed
- Management company – housing management company (residential Travel Plans), affordable housing provider (Residential Travel Plans)
- Parish Council or Community Organisations; either as a community organisation or as recipient of similar funding.

Ongoing spend on the TP, once it was under its initial implementation, should rest with the TPC although strategic decisions on investment priorities can be managed through a travel plan management group.

Travel Plans should be advertised to both people visiting and working at a particular site in order to maximise uptake and buy in to the scheme. The local authority should also advertise the benefits of implementing a Travel Plan to local businesses and residents to attract voluntary uptake of Travel Plans throughout Bedfordshire.

The local authority should use a current Travel Plan as a case study to demonstrate the benefits that can be derived from the successful implementation of a Travel Plan. Early establishment of a best practice residential scheme will be important for establishing a benchmark standard across the growth area.

Components of a Travel Plan

Although a Travel Plan will be unique to any given site, all plans should contain the following sections:

1. Background and scope of the plan	Travel planning policy background & travel elements of the organisation's activity that the Plan is addressing (commuter journeys, business travel, fleet management or other issues).
2. Objectives	Stating what the travel plan is designed to achieve (e.g. reduction in single occupancy car users, increase in public transport use).
3. Site location and general description	Explaining the site and its location, numbers of employees/pupils and their home locations, typical working hours, nature of the organisation.
4. Issues and Problems	<p>Detailing measures already in place, existing travel patterns and barriers to sustainable travel.</p> <p>Include site assessment of existing transport links and site audit of transport/travel related infrastructure.</p> <p>Identify existing patterns of travel to work/school, patterns of journeys at work if appropriate and business travel/fleet issues.</p>
5. Identifying measures	<p>Detail proposed actions and measures for achieving the objectives above.</p> <p>Consider measures designed to increase walking, cycling, car sharing or public transport use, and include plans for awareness raising/publicity/marketing and the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator.</p>
6. Targets	Identify targets against which the effectiveness of each measure will be reviewed.

	Consider short, medium and long term milestones based on survey results or the travel assessment and LTP targets.
7. Implementation & timescales	Set out a timetable for implementation of the proposed measures.
8. Monitoring & Review	Set out arrangements for the ongoing monitoring and review of the travel plan to determine whether objectives are being met.

4.2 TRAVEL PLAN DETAILS

Appendix 6 provides further detail and a checklist of the type of details that can be included in a Travel Plan. This is not an exhaustive list and developers are encouraged to include other innovative ideas. The table will also be used by local authorities to assess the Travel Plan.

Not all items in the checklist will be appropriate, but it is provided to ensure that all aspects of travel have been considered.

4.3 TARGETS FOR TRAVEL PLANS

Travel Plans must contain clear targets linked to both the objectives and the specific measures set out in the Travel Plan.

These targets will need to be monitored on a regular basis, usually annually, and should be Site-specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-related (SMART). We would advise applicants to set targets in their travel plans that *correspond to the best estimate of the maximum number of trips that can be made by non-car mode.*

Targets should be outcome not output focussed. For example if staff surveys show a current modal split of 5% walking, 10% cycling, 10% using the bus and 60% travelling by car, the objective of the plan is to reduce car use, with measures to increase walking, cycling and car-sharing. The target outcome may be to increase walking to 10%, cycling to 15% so that car use would go down to 50%.

The Travel Plan should not simply state that a target is to provide a car sharing scheme or cycle parking. These are examples of output related targets and will not be acceptable without associated outcome targets.

If there is no survey information on travel behaviour prior to the site becoming occupied, the preferred approach in Central Bedfordshire is to first estimate a baseline mode split target relevant to the site and then set a final mode split target

following survey work undertaken within the first year after the site is operational. The following sources should be used to estimate modal split, in order of priority:

- Information from the Transport Assessment.
- Census journey to work data.
- Central Bedfordshire traffic survey data.
- Other mode splits from similar developments.
- Information available from the TRICS database.
- In the absence of any relevant data, a reasonable, agreed judgment.

Further advice on setting baseline mode split for new developments can be found in the DfT's "Guidance on the Assessment of Travel Plans".

The baseline modal split, targets and Travel Plan measures may be refined following annual monitoring and review (see next section).

Developers should also refer to the Council's targets as set in the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Travel plan targets must support local policies for sustainable transport which are designed to achieve reductions in traffic congestion, improvements in air quality and increased modal share for walking, cycling and public transport.

The authority will not accept refined targets and measures that undermine the basic concept of seeking to reduce the amount of private car use.

4.4 SUBMISSION VIA OUR 'IONTRAVEL' TRAVEL PLAN SOFTWARE

iOnTRAVEL is Central Bedfordshire Council's travel plan management tool and has been designed to assist site Travel Plan Coordinators and site occupants to manage the various aspects of their travel plan's implementation.

As such, we require that all applicants submit their travel plan documentation to the authority for assessment as well as uploading the key sections of it to our software programme by following the '5 steps' on the homepage.

Please refer to www.iontravel.co.uk/centralbedfordshire for more details.

5.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

5.1 ASSESSING THE TRAVEL PLAN

Monitoring a Travel Plan is an important annual event and should be carried out by the Travel Plan Coordinator. By monitoring a Travel Plan it is possible to:

- Assess how effective the document is in achieving its aims.
- Demonstrate how committed the users of the plan have been.
- Unlock Government/private funding to implement further initiatives.
- Identify those measures which are not working.
- Concentrate resources on those measures which are working.
- Keep the document up-to-date and effective.

Monitoring should be a continuous process throughout the year but the main process of monitoring is likely to occur once a year and will involve measuring the overall effect of the document in causing a modal shift away from car use.

The main aspect of monitoring will be the travel survey which should be carried out on an annual basis. It may not be necessary to undertake a full travel survey every year and in fact a shorter, more direct travel survey would be more effective in achieving a detailed specific response.

Postal surveys or face-to-face interviews are the most effective method of obtaining information although it will depend on the organisation or area that the Travel Plan is related to. For example, an email/internet/intranet based survey would be beneficial for an office where over 95% of employees have internet/email access. This will reduce costs and time taken to collate survey data as a survey can be designed by IT staff that will automatically collate data as it is submitted from staff.

After collecting the data, it should be analysed and compared to previous travel survey responses which will highlight the progress that has been made. New targets can be set based on the survey results however, it should be noted that Travel Plans can take up to three years to effect a significant change in travel behaviour.

Below is a basic example of the measures and processes that should be monitored.

- The number of people walking.
- The number of people cycling.
- Number of cycles parked on site.
- Number of people taking up cycle loans or Bicycle User Group (BUG) membership.
- The number of people using public transport.
- The uptake of any discounted travel tickets.
- The number of car sharers.
- The number of cars parked on or near to the site.

Where possible, basic monitoring should occur before the Travel Plan is implemented so that there is a baseline set of data with which to compare the

annual survey results. Where this is not possible, a survey should be undertaken as soon as possible after implementation to gauge user opinion.

A monitoring report should be sent to the local authority so that the progress can be measured against any agreed planning conditions or in the event that help is needed to improve the success of the Travel Plan.

All Travel Plans that are produced for Central Bedfordshire should have a measurable benefit that demonstrates a reasonable level of modal shift.

The local authorities will initially consider the quality of the Travel Plan and assess its potential to deliver a sustainable travel package. Appendix 4 will be used as a checklist to ensure that the most relevant measures are covered to deliver an effective Travel Plan. Regard will also be had to whether realistic, achievable targets and objectives have been identified in the Travel Plan.

After the initial qualitative assessment and Planning Application stage, subsequent annual monitoring reports will enable a 'quantitative' assessment of the effectiveness of the Plan against its targets.

Developers may wish to refer to the Department for Transport (DfT) guidance on '**Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process**' (April 2009)⁷. However, it is not intended that the evaluation tool will be used to "score" the acceptability of the Travel Plan or any predicted reduction in 'single occupancy vehicles'.

It should be stressed that the local authority is looking for a Travel Plan which responds to the specific needs, problems and local characteristics of the site.

A clear explanation may be sought as to why certain measures are not included in a Travel Plan when it is considered relevant to do so.

5.2 MONITORING THE OUTCOMES

In order to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Travel Plan, an initial survey is required in order to provide baseline travel information of those using the site and to allow targets to be finalised. This survey information should be provided prior to planning permission being granted (if possible). If the development is speculative baseline travel information should refer to the TA or other relevant data source as listed in the 'targets' section.

In most cases, survey information should be gathered typically within the first six months of the site becoming operational in order to inform the first review of the travel plan.

It is also important to remember that the baseline survey information should be used to identify or refine targets and measures included in the Plan.

⁷ See Appendix 1 for more details.

It is important to note that the results of monitoring will demonstrate whether the Plan's targets are being met. Where targets are not being met the authorities will expect steps to be taken to improve the Travel Plan measures to achieve targets (see final chapter, 'Enforcement').

Repeat annual surveys are likely to be the best form of monitoring progress, and detailed guidance on how they should be conducted can be found in the Department for Transport's publication "The Essential Guide to Travel Planning"⁸ Sample surveys have also been included in Appendices 8-11.

Repeat Surveys should normally be undertaken each year for the agreed monitoring period (five years minimum). Examples of travel surveys are located in Appendices 8, 9, 10 and 11.

After each annual survey a monitoring report should be submitted to the local authority. The planning condition or legal agreement will provide details of the agreed monitoring arrangements and how the local authority will assess annual monitoring reports.

Monitoring can be undertaken by the end user, by an independent third party or, in conjunction with the local authority. Key issues to be specified prior to occupation of the development include:

- When monitoring will take place.
- The nature of the monitoring.
- Who will undertake the monitoring.
- When the monitoring data is to be submitted to the local authority.
- Who will pay and who has access to the results.

The results of the monitoring should be submitted to the local authority with interpretation of the results and comment on whether the Travel Plan targets are 'on track' for being delivered. Central Bedfordshire Council may use the results of annual monitoring to demonstrate the effectiveness of Travel Plans in the authority. The following basic information should be gathered and reported in each monitoring report:

The numbers of people travelling to the site in the following categories:

- Staff, visitors, customers, students/pupils, residents (as appropriate to the intended use)

The mode of travel for people travelling to the site should also be reported in the following categories:

- Walking, cycling, motorcycle/moped/scooter, taxi, bus, train, car (sole occupant), car (shared occupant).

⁸ See <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/travelplans/work/essentialguide.pdf>

Mode of travel should be reported as actual numbers as well as percentage share per mode of travel.

Each monitoring report should compare annual data against both the previous year and baseline (i.e. first) year of monitoring where appropriate. Comparison of actual numbers and percentage modal share will be required.

5.3 REVIEWING THE TRAVEL PLAN

It is agreed that in Central Bedfordshire, there may be justifiable reasons for changing objectives, targets or measures in a Travel Plan. Annual monitoring reports should be the main indicator as to the need to review these issues within Travel Plan.

For example, where matters beyond an occupier's control mean that use of public transport is not attractive (due to excessive congestion outside the site) it may be necessary to adjust the mode split target for public transport use downwards, walking, cycling and car sharing upwards.

It will be for the occupier to demonstrate where circumstances mean that achieving the Travel Plan's objectives is not possible. Lack of resources and promotion is not a viable argument to non-delivery of an agreed Travel Plan.

It is important to note, however, that the overall objective of promoting sustainable travel behaviour remains the key.

6.0 ENFORCEMENT

6.1 GENERAL APPROACH TO ENFORCEMENT

There could be a number of reasons why Travel Plan measures do not work and targets are not met. As previously discussed, monitoring is the most effective and regular way of identifying success. Interpretation of monitoring will help define what may not be working.

In Central Bedfordshire, partnership working between the developer or occupier and local authority is the preferred approach to addressing problems. Enforcement will only take place as a last resort. It should be stressed that the local authority will take all reasonable steps to achieve a mutually acceptable solution for all parties. It may be recommended that a revised Travel Plan is submitted for approval by the local authority.

6.2 PENALTIES AND REMEDIES

Where penalties for non-compliance are to be considered, they are likely to be based on 'triggers' releasing additional resources where a specific target is not being met by an agreed deadline.

Any 'triggers' will be agreed with the local authority at planning application stage and clearly specified within a legal agreement. These will need to have been determined as being fair and reasonable between all parties and should be subject to legal scrutiny to ensure that the agreed terms are enforceable. Should a developer wilfully neglect to implement terms and conditions of the planning consent by failing to implement specific measures, conduct and submit monitoring reports or renege on financial agreements relating to the Travel Plan, the local authority may elect to implement relevant penalty clauses.

Examples of 'triggers' include where an agreed target modal split is not achieved could be: additional financial contributions towards non-car modes of transport (i.e. funding an additional bus service), or highway improvements that may have initially been required in the absence of the Travel Plan. Penalties will need to vary to reflect the individual circumstances of each site. There will also need to be an agreed procedure between all parties detailing the process that should be followed prior to their imposition.

In the case of financial penalties, the local authority may consider the need for the developer to deposit a bond or establish some form of trust to guarantee monies are available should the development site change ownership in the future. It may also be appropriate that should financial penalties be collected, the funds raised should be ring fenced for sustainable transport measures.

There may be instances where both parties (developer and local authority) may wish to include a clause in the agreement that, in the case of a dispute, an independent

third party could be called in, paid for by the developer, to resolve the dispute and identify a way forward.

It is important to emphasize to the applicant that the intention of the TP approach is to “load” resources towards making the travel plan work well, rather than hold back on implementation of good incentives because of the “risk value” associated with penalties. Successful case studies⁹ already point to investing the majority of funding in up-front TP incentives, underpinned by ongoing revenue streams, as opposed to “hold back” of capital resources in case targets are not met.

The targets contained within the Travel Plan document should firstly be deliverable and not impossible to achieve – a Travel Plan is not a magic wand! With that said, it is important that the Travel Plan commitments are enforceable. Travel Plans measures should ideally be secured through a section 106 agreement which ties in the development of the site.

It should be made clear what will happen should the developer/site owner fail to meet the key targets or obligations as stated in the Travel Plan. In this event the section 106 agreement should also outline suitable sanctions or penalties, for example, payments to cover the cost of implementing measures that have not been introduced in time.

The agreement detailing the sanctions should enable the local authority sufficient ability to use its discretion when enforcing the obligations as detailed in the Travel Plan. It should enable the local authority to decide if certain measures are no longer relevant and thus do not need to be delivered etc, and also allow the addition of other reasonable measures should it be necessary.

Progressing Travel Plan agreements should be done through negotiation with the developer and a clear dialogue should be maintained.

The S106 agreement should be flexible enough to enable annual changes to the travel plan document so that resources are not wasted on measures which are proving ineffective or which have exceeded their predicted popularity.

⁹ Refer to the DfT Residential Travel Plan Guide.