



**The Plan for Stafford Borough –
Publication**

Examination Statement – Transport

October 2013

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TRANSPORT (Policies T1-T2)

1. KEY ISSUE:

Does the Plan set out a clear strategy to promote sustainable transportation and manage the demand for travel, which is justified, effective, soundly based, appropriate for Stafford Borough and consistent with national policy?

- 1.1. The Plan for Stafford Borough- Publication (Submission) Document (A1), hereafter "the Plan (A1)", provides a clear strategy for the promotion of sustainable transportation and management of demand for travel. The overall strategic approach is to reduce the reliance on the private car through provision of increased services and facilities in key accessible locations, and to maximise accessibility through promoting the use of public transport, walking and cycling. This is set out in the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives (page 17) in the Plan (A1). Policies T1 and T2 are appropriate because they are consistent with, and will help to deliver, the Spatial Vision and Key Objectives.
- 1.2. There is some support from representations to the Plan (A1) for Policies T1 and T2 including for local transport networks to provide new infrastructure. However a number of representations raised concerns about all developments needing to provide transport assessments. Some representors argued that key transport infrastructure rather than protected routes should be shown on the Policies Map, with a reduced length for the Eastern Distributor Road. Concerns were raised about increased car usage and lack of regard to the High Speed 2 proposals, whilst specific traffic concerns were raised regarding Raleigh Hall Recognised Industrial Estate conflicting between Policy T1 and Economy Policy E4.
- 1.3. The Council considers that these concerns are addressed by Policy T1 and Policy T2, in support of Spatial Principles SP1 and SP3, which seek to ensure that development takes place sustainably within an existing transport network to avoid significant impacts on the local environment and encourage people to access services by foot and reducing car.
- 1.4. The approach set in Policies T1 and T2 is also consistent with the Development Strategy established through the Spatial Principles. Spatial Principle 3 (SP3) (page 26) identifies the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy where the majority of future development will take place, which reflects the existing future role of settlements in Stafford, Stone and the Key Service Villages. This approach will help to reduce the need to travel, by increasing provision of services and facilities in accessible locations and improving public transport provision. Spatial Principle 4 (SP4) (page 28) specifies that the majority of housing will be focused on the main settlements of Stafford and Stone, with the remainder focused on the Key Service Villages. These are the most sustainable locations in terms of accessibility to services and facilities and will provide the best opportunity to maximise sustainable transportation modes such as walking and cycling.
- 1.5. Policy T1 outlines the key principles involved in achieving a sustainable transport system, while Policy T2 outlines key issues which development proposals will need to address. This should be an effective approach for the Plan, because Policy T1 helps promote sustainable transportation through appropriate measures such as ensuring development that generates significant traffic flows is located within close proximity of the primary network. This approach is further supported by the identification in the Plan (A1) of Strategic Development Locations (SDLs), which will ensure that development is close to the existing urban areas of Stafford and Stone Towns, and thus reduce reliance on the

private car and maximise the travel and accessibility through promoting the use of public transport, walking and cycling.

- 1.6. These policies collectively help create a strategy that promotes sustainable transportation and manages demand for travel. This is consistent with NPPF (F1) paras 17, 34, 37 and 38, which seek to direct new development to sustainable locations, and ensure that development generating significant movement is located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport is maximised.
- 1.7. Policies T1 and T2 are justified, being based on a proportionate and credible evidence base. Documents in particular which have helped inform this policy approach are the Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy (D18 – D23); Stafford Eastern Distributor Road: Indicative Economic Assessment (D24) together with the Transport Evidence to Support a Northern Direction of Growth (D25), Transport Evidence to Support a Western Direction of Growth (D26), the Testing for M6 Junction 13 and 14 Transport Evidence Base – Final Report (D27) and the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan: Strategy Plan and Appendices (E30) co-ordinated by Staffordshire County Council. The Policies also take account of the key infrastructure requirements, which have been derived from extensive workshops and consultation with key partner authorities, particularly Staffordshire County Council through the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 1 Final Report (D58) and the Stafford Borough Infrastructure Strategy: Stage 2 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (D57). In addition, the Whole Plan Viability Report (D52) highlights that the levels of infrastructure required to deliver sustainable development will not compromise the Plan's economic viability
- 1.8. Justification for Policy T1 and T2 has been informed through preparing the plan since 2009 and the process of public consultation and engagement with Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough – Issues & Options (G6), the Plan for Stafford Borough: Draft Core Policies (G5) and the Plan for Stafford Borough – Draft Publication (G2).

2. TRANSPORT (Policy T1)

Do the proposed measures effectively achieve a sustainable transport system across Stafford Borough, including reducing the need to travel by private car and requiring new development to produce Transport Assessments and Travel Plans?

- 2.1. The proposed measures outlined in Policy T1 (page 86) of the Plan (A1) help achieve a sustainable transport system across Stafford Borough. The intention is to facilitate a modal shift change away from the use of private car, and to reduce the demand for travel. This will be achieved by promoting more effective integration of land use and transportation as detailed in Spatial Principle 1 (SP1), with increased provision of services and facilities in key locations, identified through the Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy defined in Spatial Principle 3 (SP3), particularly those that are accessible by foot or cycling.
- 2.2. The measures proposed also encourage mixed use development to take place where travel choices (e.g. bus stops, railway stations, park and ride facilities) exist. The need for travel assessments and travel plans will ensure developments take account of the implications for the current and proposed transport network, while reducing the impact of traffic flows by ensuring sites are accessible via sustainable modes of transport and reduce private car use. These measures encourage development to be located near good links to main transport networks, thereby helping to achieve NPPF (F1) paras. 29, 30, 32 and 36 in supporting a pattern of development which facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport and achieving safe and suitable access to sites for all people.

- 2.3. As previously stated a number of representations raised concerns about all developments needing to provide transport assessments being too onerous. The Borough Council considers that the Plan (A1) is sound but would benefit from an amendment concerning this. Therefore the Schedule of Additional (Minor) Modifications (A26) identifies a change to criteria b, listed as M68. This is to ensure its compliance with NPPF para 193, which considers the necessity of the application.
- 2.4. In the context of the evidence base and public engagement, as set out above, the Borough Council considers that Policy T1 and its proposed measures are effective in achieving a sustainable transport system. In terms of the Eastern Distributor Road this matter is addressed in the Matter 4 – Examination Statement for Stafford Town, which includes proposed amendments to the Policies Map. In terms of the Strategic Development Location – Employment at Raleigh Hall this matter is addressed in the Matter 5 – Examination Statement for Economy and Policy E4.

Should the Plan refer to the High Speed Rail HS2 proposals?

- 2.5. In January 2013 the company behind the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail proposals published a document entitled 'High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain's Future: Phase Two the route to Leeds Manchester and beyond (E37)'. Currently the High Speed HS2 proposals are undergoing an extensive consultation stage across the country based on this report, and the associated route maps for Stafford Borough are listed as documents E38 to E49). At this stage the Plan (A1) does not include reference to the report or the detailed route as part of the Policies Map (A2), because the route may change as a result of the consultation process. Therefore the Council does not consider it appropriate to refer to the High Speed Rail HS2 proposals. Nevertheless based on the current route provided, the High Speed 2 proposal would cross Stafford Borough passing north of Great Haywood before crossing the Staffordshire County Showground, passing north of Stafford town close to (but not affecting in any way) the North of Stafford Strategic Development Location before heading across the A34, passing between the M6 and west of Stone before crossing the M6 to head past Swynnerton before leaving the Borough near to Stableford. At the point in time there are no implications for the Plan's (A1) proposals arising from the High Speed 2 route.

3. PARKING & MANOUEVRING FACILITIES (Policy T2)

What is the justification for including a detailed policy and appendix on parking and manoeuvring standards, and is this approach consistent with national policy?

- 3.1. Policy T2 provides a comprehensive policy on parking and manoeuvring standards. The approach contained in the Policy is practical and supportive towards creating quality and attractive parking facilities that are safe and convenient for communities to access. This approach helps create attractive and sustainable locations for people to live, work and enjoy. It also encourages the use of public transport provision and helps reduce the need for car ownership in support of travel plans and assessments from developers.
- 3.2. The parking standards outlined in Appendix B of the Plan (A1) are considered to be in accordance with NPPF (F1) para. 39 requirements, which encourages the assessment of development proposals to take account of the accessibility of the development (safe and adequate for turning and circulation for all modes of transport); the type and mix of new development; opportunities for public transport; and car ownership levels. Appendix B ensures adequate car parking

and manoeuvring provision is achieved for each type of development for residential and non-residential uses. It also helps achieve the objective of NPPF (F1) para. 40, which seeks to improve the quality, safety and convenience of parking whilst maximising parking standards. Furthermore the car parking standards have been subject to previous public consultation and engagement through the Plan for Stafford Borough – Draft Publication (G2) prior to inclusion in the Plan (A1). There have been no significant representations or objections to the car parking standards outlined in Appendix B. Therefore the Council considers that the car parking standards associated with Policy T2 in the Plan (A1) are appropriate and justified.