

# SITE DESIGN

- Improving design and facilities to encourage healthier travel

## GETTING THE PRINCIPLES OF SITE DESIGN RIGHT

All sites should adopt a 'pedestrian first' policy. Even if people are only walking from their cars, the site design should minimise the generation and expression of antagonism between people. The on-site road layout should naturally keep vehicles as close to walking speed as possible. Physical measures should provide a safe, child friendly environment, e.g. home zones.

“The layout of a new housing or mixed use area will need to take account of factors other than street design and traffic provision. They include the potential impact on climate change, such as the extent to which layouts promote sustainable modes of transport or reduce the need to travel.”

*(Manual for Streets, p57)*

Physical aspects of the built or man-made environment will be examined in a site audit. Design measures are best, and most easily, implemented at the same time as the construction of the new buildings and spaces which they form part of. Some can still be retro-fitted, but it is important that physical measures are designed and implemented at the same time as the mainstream fabric of the building and its surroundings (e.g. in car parks) to reduce costs wherever possible.

**+ MORE ABOUT** Further advice about **auditing a site** for the features listed in this section is given in the Site Audit and Design Guidelines, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk).

New developments provide the chance to design in measures to encourage sustainable transport. Architects and designers should be made aware of the selection of physical measures needed for the travel plan and the principles behind it from day one.

**+ MORE ABOUT** Links to further advice about useful principles relating to the **design of residential, employment and mixed use sites** including car parks are available via the Resource Centre for travel plans on [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk).

## DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) gives disabled people a right of access to goods, facilities, services and premises.

The Department for Transport has produced guidance on providing good access for disabled people, whilst also benefiting the lives of everyone.

“Those who are travelling with small children or are carrying luggage or heavy shopping will all benefit from an accessible environment, as will people with temporary mobility problems ... and many older people.”

*(Inclusive Mobility, p4)*

**+ MORE ABOUT** Further information about better **design for disabled people** is provided in Inclusive Mobility, via the Resource Centre for travel plans on [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk).

## EXAMPLES OF MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS:

- Good lighting
- Lowered ('dropped') kerbs
- Dedicated access points to and through the site for pedestrians and cyclists – which avoid dismounting
- A permeable design and feel to the site
- Suitable surfacing/paths

**+ MORE ABOUT** Links to further advice on **workplace transport safety** are available via the Resource Centre for travel plans on [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk). **+ Further advice about parking for all modes of transport** is given in the Enforce section of the Menu of Measures, available via [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk).



## DESIRABLE DESIGN ELEMENTS TO ENCOURAGE SMARTER TRAVEL:

- Road design to allow buses to reach within 400m of all entrances within the site and connect well with the surrounding highway network
- Design measures to manage the use of the site by skateboarders and other 'free-sports', e.g. BMX-ing
- Security measures:
  - CCTV or good natural surveillance
  - Lighting
  - Crunchy gravel to create an audible footpath to improve the sense of safety for walkers (though this can be a hazard to cyclists)
- Way-finding signage and legible design should be used which makes it easy for people to find their way around on foot, by cycle and by motorised modes. This minimises wrong turns and makes journeys easier, safer and more sustainable to accomplish. Sometimes the planned movements by planners and architects might not be visible to those on the ground without a birds-eye view of the development

**+ MORE ABOUT** Further information about providing **signage and practical information** is given in the Educate section of the Menu of Measures, available via [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk).

- Community notice boards
- Seating/benches and waiting areas
- Subsurface bins or waste containers to store rubbish and recycling without obstructing the footway
- Use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) to manage drainage on footways

“Pedestrians may be walking with purpose or engaging in other activities such as play, socialising, shopping or just sitting (p70). [...] Seating on key pedestrian routes should be considered every 100m to provide rest points and encourage street activity.”

*(Manual for Streets, p63)*

**+ MORE ABOUT** Further advice about carrying out a **site audit** is given in the Site Audit and Design Guidelines, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk). **+ Further information about parking** is given in the Enforce section of the Menu of Measures.

## USING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENTS

“The layout of a development has a significant impact on how people choose to travel.”

*(Building Sustainable Transport into New Developments, p6)*

Design & Access Statements (D&As, for short) explain the thinking behind a planning application (Source: Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them, p6). These accompany both outline and full planning applications, and are used to direct future, more detailed design and access decisions during 'reserved matters'. Travel plans should always reference D&As when they accompany planning applications.

### ASPECTS OF DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENTS RELEVANT TO TRAVEL PLANS:

- Layout – of roads within the development
- Access – access and circulation routes to and through the development for pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles
- Landscaping – hard measures such as parking and potential barriers such as hedges, fences, screening or walls
- Appearance – visual impression of buildings and overall espoused ethos of the development

“...the benefits of better-designed commercial developments include higher rent levels, lower maintenance costs, enhanced regeneration and increased public support for the development.”

*(Manual for Streets, p51)*

**+ MORE ABOUT** Further information about **Design and Access Statements** as required for planning applications is given in the Site Audit and Design Guidelines, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk). **+ Further information about off-site travel measures** is given in the Enable section of the Menu of Measures, available via [www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk](http://www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk).



## TRAVEL MEASURES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

### TRAVEL MEASURES FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES:

The Code for Sustainable Homes allocates points for energy saving measures which relate to sustainable travel:

- Drying space
- Cycle storage
- Home office space
- Home user guide containing information relating to the site and its surroundings
- Monitoring of CO<sub>2</sub> arising from transport to and from the site

### BUILDING FOR LIFE:

Design is a consideration when it comes to residential travel plans (Source: Department for Transport). The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) advises considering the following:

- Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?
- Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle-friendly?
- Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?
- Is public space well-designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?
- Does the development have easy access to public transport?
- Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities such as schools, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafes?

(Source: Building for Life)

**+ MORE ABOUT** Further advice about measures to encourage more sustainable patterns of travel in **residential developments** is given in the Site Audit and Design Guidelines, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via [www.moving Somerset forward.co.uk](http://www.moving Somerset forward.co.uk).

### INSIDE: MEASURES INTERNAL TO THE BUILDING

In some cases, it will be necessary to consider the internal access to a building early on in the planning stages, to ensure that suitable access to interior facilities supporting sustainable travel is available (this can also affect the positioning of outdoor cycle shelters and parking and desire lines for movement across the site and into the building).



### INDOOR FACILITIES TO ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT USERS:

- Showers (with complementary shower packs)
- Changing rooms (including comfortable seating and facilities such as vending machines)
- Lockers (mixture of full length and multi-tiered)
- Cloak room/areas
- Somewhere to hang wet clothes and towels to dry out
- Safe storage for equipment, e.g. cycle/motorcycle helmets, clothing, luggage, daytime shopping/grocers (e.g. refrigerated units or cool storage areas), cycles
- Change machines for bus tickets
- Public toilets
- Way-finding signage indoors
- Indoor waiting areas with travel information screens
- Access into buildings for people with disabilities
- Enquiry desk for travel administration, e.g. pool cars, pool bikes, public transport discounts
- Office facilities, e.g. hot desks, meeting rooms, conference spaces, videoconferencing facilities
- Live/work units

“Unless you can accommodate the needs of cyclists, particularly during hot or bad weather, you will not increase the numbers cycling to work.”

*(Travel Plan Resources Pack for Employers, Summary)*

### OUTSIDE: MEASURES AROUND THE BUILDING ON-SITE

If facilities are put in out of the way places (be they shops, toilets, or cycle parking), they may not be used or known, cared about or used. Equally, facilities should not be positioned so as to cause discomfort, danger or irritation to their neighbours – e.g. busy traffic movements next to residential areas or walking routes.

### POSSIBLE ON-SITE MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT:

- Cycle centre, for on-site repair/servicing/maintenance
- Picnic tables/outdoor eating areas

### OUTSIDE: OFF-SITE MEASURES FOR SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY AROUND THE SITE

New facilities that attract people should be well positioned in relation to where people already live and work. Good accessibility helps minimise the need for car use.

## OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE SITE ACCESS BY SUSTAINABLE MODES:

- Restrictions on car movements to and through the site, e.g. speed limits, community pace car
- Dedicated on-site cycle and pedestrian routes from the site entrance and around the site (at grade or grade separated, i.e. same level as road surface or raised above it)
- Planting features and trees which can be used to create a safer environment for slower travel options
- Other design features/treatments (e.g. surfacing, gateways, raised crossings/tables, vertical deflections, area-wide traffic calming such as pedestrian zones, 20mph zones, quiet lanes, home zones)
- Ongoing maintenance (vegetation management, keeping footways clean and clear, maintaining access routes)