

CARRYING OUT THE SITE AND DESIGN AUDIT

The aim of the audit is to discover how well the site caters for a range of sustainable travel movements and access requirements. It should be seen as a 'self-help' process for analysing travel opportunities and problems.

UNSCRABBLE YOUR TRAVEL: USING CHECKLISTS TO ANALYSE YOUR SITE

The worksheets (inspection schedules) provided help you look at the right things in and around your site. This information can be collected by visual observations and site visits, and will be aided by using any available maps (e.g. Google, Multimaps, Local Live) and plans of the site, as well as bus timetables, etc.

It is advisable to walk around the site and its surroundings with a clipboard, digital camera, stopwatch and a copy of the worksheets provided. It might be advisable to arrange this walking tour with members of your travel plan steering group.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice on **who needs to be involved** in the travel plan process is given in the Exemplify section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingssomersetforward.co.uk.

The site audit is intended to set the baseline upon which measures can be built.

Where the site is a new development, the audit of the site design features and facilities should be based on the plans of the site, as completed physical features will probably not be in place to inspect, complimented by a tour of the surrounding area and existing connections.

SUPPLYING THE NECESSARY SITE AUDIT INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL PLANS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

The site audit for travel is an important influence during the design of any new development.

Information about people's movements and travel patterns and external transport services may already be included as part of a Transport Assessment. A movement diagram of how people are expected to move to and through the development on foot should also be included in a Design and Access Statement. Both of these should be included in the Travel Plan as part of its evidence base. Together, these three documents provide the mechanism for assessing and managing access to sites.

"Travel plans ... should consider all aspects of multi-modal access for all purposes to the site."

(Using the Planning Process to Secure Travel Plans, p9)

TRAVEL PLANNING FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS: TRANSPORT ASSESSMENTS AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENTS

Both Transport Assessments and Design & Access Statements can be used to support the travel planning process.

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENTS

Transport Assessments (TAs) are often asked to address (Source: Using the Planning Process to Secure Travel Plans, p18):

- The extent to which the development meets policy objectives
- Site characteristics
- The scale, land use and other details of the proposed development
- The accessibility of the site by different modes (including walking, cycling and public transport)
- The potential traffic impact without a travel plan
- The potential creation of local parking and other problems
- The wider land use and transport context

Measures and proposals for mitigating the impact of travel should be developed within a travel plan, alongside the transport assessment. TAs should consider any measures to accommodate car use through the use of additional road capacity as the lowest priority (Source: Guidance on transport assessment).

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENTS

In Design and Access Statements (D&As), the following information must always be supplied (Source: Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System, p13):

- Land use – zones and uses
- Amount – development proposed for each use (residential – number of dwellings of different types; commercial – total indoor floorspace)
- Indicative layout – including site boundaries
- Scale – height, width, and length limits for buildings on site
- Indicative access points

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about using **Design & Access Statements** is given under Site Design in the Encourage section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

D&As should also provide complimentary information about person movements:

“The statement ... should show that the person applying has surveyed the movement patterns and layouts in the surrounding area...”

(Design and Access Statements: How to Write, Read and Use Them, p25)

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice on **movement diagrams** is given under Reporting the Findings of the Site Audit in this guidance.

PURPOSE OF THE SITE AUDIT:

The site audit is not primarily about analysing the current transport operations of the company itself; it is about exploring which travel choices are possible (and permissible) to and through the site, as allowed for by physical facilities, services and policies on-site. Surveys can also be used to collect information about the travel patterns and preferences of people accessing the site.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about surveying people's travel patterns is given in the Monitoring Guidance, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans on www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

USING SITE AUDIT WORKSHEETS AND MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR SITE

These worksheets are designed to help you consider anything relevant to travel in and around your site.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **including the results of the site audit** in the travel plan is given under Reporting the Findings of the Site Audit in this guidance. **+ A summary** of the elements that can be improved in response to a site audit is given in the Enable section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

FOCUS OF WORKSHEETS:

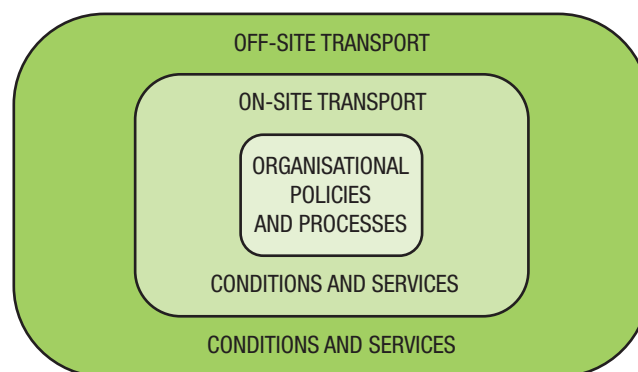
The site audit and design worksheets help you describe your current transport services and facilities in terms of:

- What?
- Where?
- How many?
- What condition?
- Comparison of provision against the ‘ideal’?

GROUPING ELEMENTS TO FOCUS ON:

- External to the site
- Internal to the premises and buildings
- Internal to the organisation and operational or policy framework for the site

This is depicted in the diagram below.



The worksheets cover all modes of transport and access. Each worksheet provides details about design criteria that make most difference to the success of the site in supporting smarter travel choices. This is summarised below.

FILLING IN THE WORKSHEETS

For each criteria in the worksheets, you are required to tick a box reflecting your findings about the performance of your site. The options are explained below:

PERFORMANCE LEVEL	GUIDELINES
Could be improved a lot	There are substantial deficiencies in this aspect. There is scope for practical improvements as part of the travel plan.
Some scope for improvement	This aspect is not ideal, and could be improved to some degree as part of the travel plan
No room for improvements	This aspect is as good as it possibly can be. Note, however, it is important for even minor improvements to be noted as these could make a large difference to everyday users.

You should read through these summaries before filling in each worksheet.



A) WALKING

Walking is best suited to commuting journeys under two miles each way.

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on identifying weakest links - where improvements can be made in provision of safe and easy walking routes between your site and other local destinations (such as neighbourhood facilities and local transport services). Photos will be particularly important to include in the travel plan to support an explanation (and revisiting, if necessary) of any problems and issues identified. Pedestrian links should be direct, follow desire lines and avoid deviation to minimise distances travelled. (Desire lines are the routes people would choose to travel if given a free choice, often using a direct route.) This includes looking at access points around the perimeter of the site, and safe and attractive routes to/through sites. The audit should give special consideration to the young, old and those with disabilities.

+ MORE ABOUT Further information about **improving navigation for pedestrians** can be found in Manual for Streets (p57, 59) via the Resource Centre for Travel Plans, and in the Educate section of the Menu of Measures as part of the Manual for Travel Plans, both available via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

“Walking deserves particular attention as the ‘glue’ between other forms of transport. Improving and promoting journeys on foot can make bus and rail more attractive.”

(Making Travel Plans Work, p20)

Common issues include people having to walk around ‘three sides of a square’ to get around road junctions or having to wait excessive lengths of time to cross roads using multi-staged button-controlled crossings. Much of the information required may be similar to that needed for cyclists.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **encouraging walking and cycling** is given under Site Design in the Encourage section of the Menu of Measures as part of the Manual for Travel Plans, and in Manual for Streets (sections 6.8.13, 6.8.18, and 8.3.42) via the Resource Centre for travel plans, both available via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



B) CYCLING

Cycling is best suited to journeys under five miles each way.

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on identifying the weakest links - where improvements can be made in provision for safe and easy cycling between your site and other local destinations (including neighbourhood facilities and local transport services). All supporting facilities will need to be well-designed, easy and attractive to use, and fit-for-purpose to encourage their use by cyclists. Cycling is affected by the weather, and is particularly dependent on facilities at the end of the trip (such as at your site). Attention should be given to the ease of access to indoor facilities (including locked cycle parking cages), with a bike, panniers, carrying luggage, wearing a helmet, etc.

Much of the information required may be similar to that needing to be collected for walkers and motorcyclists.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **designing cycle parking** is given in the Enforce section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



C) PUBLIC TRANSPORT - BUS

Bus use is best suited where homes and workplaces are connected within 400m of good bus services (either in terms of costs, frequency or quality of service).

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on identifying bus services departing from or near the site, across different times and days of the week and year. This should cover all operators, including any demand responsive transport options that might exist, Park & Ride, and community-based transport, where relevant to that facility. Provision of travel information and waiting areas on-and off-site should also be audited.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **information provision** is given in the Educate section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

The audit should also consider the facilities at the other end of journeys in addition to those at the site; deficiencies in these may also be picked up through a travel questionnaire survey.

The standard journey time used in accessibility planning for bus use includes the time taken to access the bus stop, waiting times, journey time and accessing the facility at the destination end. Audit and survey results can be used as evidence to back-up negotiations between employers and local authorities with bus operators to improve aspects of their services. This can lead to the rescheduling of services, relocation of bus stops, extension of bus routes, routing of buses onto site, and the laying on of new connections.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **improving public transport opportunities** is given in the Enable and Encourage sections of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk. **+ Further information what public transport** is available, Somerset County Council's opinion of services, operational goals for those services and potential for any new services is available by contacting Transporting Somerset via the Resource Centre for travel plans on www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

You should be aware that individual operators might only supply information about their own services on their websites and timetables and not those of their competitors. Therefore you will need to ensure that, if there is more than one bus operator serving your site, you obtain details about services run by all relevant operators.



D) RAIL

Train use is viable for homes or workplaces within a mile of a railway station, or further where there are good connecting services by bus or cycle.

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on safe, convenient and easy access to and from the rail stations at either end of common journeys made to and from your site.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **improving public transport** opportunities is given in the Enable and Encourage sections of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



E) FACILITIES FOR MOTOR USERS

Car sharing and motorcycles can provide good transport alternatives in hard-to-reach areas and workplaces.

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on physical features for motorcyclists and car users or passengers. Parking areas should be given special consideration to the extent that they should form shared areas for all modes of travel, and as such appropriate health and safety and user considerations should be borne in mind when assessing the appropriateness of car parking design and layout.



Motorcyclists commonly look for the same features and facilities as cyclists. Ensuring security for parked motorcycles by siting in visible areas is important. Poor provision of motorcycle parking will lead to informal or inappropriate parking, which should be avoided, such as (Source: Guidelines for Motorcycling, p39):

- Illegal or inappropriate parking, e.g. on pavements or footways next to buildings
- Machines secured to street furniture
- Unauthorised use of cycle parking
- Overflow at motorcycle parking bays
- Obstruction to traffic, and complaints from residents, businesses or other users

+ MORE ABOUT

Further advice about **accommodating motor users** is given in the Menu of Measures in the Enforce section and under Site Design in the Encourage section available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans, and also in Guidelines for Motorcycling available via the Resource Centre for travel plans on www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



F) POOLED FACILITIES AND FLEET

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on shared equipment and other items provided by the organisation which are lent out to employees to encourage sustainable travel, e.g. bicycles, cars, umbrellas.

+ MORE ABOUT

Further advice about **providing pooled equipment** is given in the Enable section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



G) DISTRIBUTION

Focus of audit: The audit should focus on how easy it is for deliveries to be accepted on-site without inconveniencing or causing unnecessary disruption to other means of access to and uses on the site. This should ensure health and safety as well as minimising local environmental impacts.

+ MORE ABOUT

Further advice about **smarter freight management** is given in the Enable section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



H) FACILITIES

Focus of audit: The audit should focus on physical facilities and services provided on and off-site, to assist with accessibility to everyday needs, and to minimise the need for carborne travel away from the site at lunchtimes or on the way in/back home.



I) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Replacement of physical journeys by IT is best suited to sites where journeys to meetings are regularly undertaken, particularly where these regularly cover long distances.

Focus of audit: The audit should set about establishing the level of provision for teleconferencing (i.e. meetings across cyberspace which do not involve travelling at all) and the extent to which smarter working is enabled.

+ MORE ABOUT

Further advice about **smarter working** is given in the Encourage section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



J) ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT AND POLICIES

Organisational policies, processes and practices should fuel the fires of travel behaviour change, and positively support smarter travel practices. Hence, they may be equally as important as part of the site audit as hard or physical measures.

Focus of the audit: The audit should be focused on the operational aspects that set the context for the travel plan on site. Included is the use of land (e.g. residential, employment, mixed use), number of staff/residents/visitors/customers, and types of employment/dwellings, and organisational policies such as flexible working and the employment of a travel plan coordinator.

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **company travel management** is given in the Exemplify section of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.



K) RESIDENTIAL DESIGN

Focus of audit: The audit should concentrate on measures to provide a mix of travel opportunities in residential developments. This is in addition to the measures contained under other sections of the audit. The audit should ensure that the development is consistent with supporting sustainable travel opportunities, as expressed in design guidelines (e.g. Manual for Streets, Making Residential Travel Plans Work, Code for Sustainable Homes).

+ MORE ABOUT Further advice about **site design** is given in the Encourage and Enforce sections of the Menu of Measures, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.

REVIEWING THE SITE AUDIT

The site audit should be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that it is kept up to date with any changes to local transport conditions or operational context of the company or site. The full process should be undertaken at least every five years to re-assess the transport opportunities available to/from site. This should be added as an action within the travel plan.

+ MORE ABOUT Further information about **completing an Action Plan** is given in the Monitoring Guidance, available as part of the Manual for Travel Plans via www.movingsomersetforward.co.uk.