

Thurrock Council

Travel plans guidance

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1. Foreword

Thurrock Council is aware for the need to reduce congestion and unnecessary journeys within the borough and to offer 'suitable and sustainable alternative methods of travel'.

Reduction in single person journeys and therefore congestion is a priority as this is the area relating directly to other benefits such as increased health, less stress, punctuality, air quality, and better local transport services. There are many alternative options available to the people of Thurrock and these are discussed within the following document.

A Travel Plan (TP) is a means by which a strategic method of transport reduction can be implemented to achieve government targets. It is with the implementation of these plans that specific areas can be addressed to reduce congestion and pinpoint unique initiatives for the benefit of the employee, employer, and the borough of Thurrock.

This document provides guidance for the development of TPs, giving ideas from which companies can formulate their own TPs. There is no 'correct' way to implement a TP as they are specific to individual employers and developments but this guidance provides a base from which the most effective TP can be produced and implemented.

Purpose for guidance

This document sets out the relevant guidance needed for developers considering a TP, providing a structured format ensuring that the aims of the council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) are met.

Guidance will apply to new developments and existing sites looking to expand, providing them with a framework for the production and implementation of a TP.

The TP will provide an employer with information pertinent to the travel movements of its employees and customers, and provide alternative methods for these movements. Predominantly, it will look at reducing car journeys to and from the workplace and facilitate the availability of alternative methods of travel.

Developers will benefit from TPs because they provide a platform from which development plans can be progressed in areas that are sometimes overlooked. The TP offers the ability to enter into an agreement to effectively reduce transport movements and meet the aims of the council's LTP.

The TP provides the relevant information necessary for each individual development and recognises the unique qualities needed within each development and therefore within each TP.

Tps are to be implemented and sustained with long-term objectives taking into account the needs of the developer, the employee and the environment. An effective TP will be built upon foundations that will withstand economic and development changes and progress towards sustaining monitored targets set out within the LTP.

2. Introduction

In 2001, Thurrock Council announced the implementation of Transport/Travel Plans within the borough due to issues arising within the Local Transport Plan for 2001-2006.

TP documents will be produced to accompany development proposals within the borough in accordance with the government white paper 'A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone' and pollution prevention guidelines (PPG13).

The following document provides guidance to be followed when implementing a TP. This guidance is a framework that takes into account the individuality of each specific development and realizes the unique qualities that each development will bring to its' TP.

Each development will interpret its' own understanding of what needs to be addressed within their individual TP.

The purpose of the TP is outlined in the LTP.

"A Transport Plan is a package of measures to discourage staff from driving alone to work and to encourage them to use more environmentally friendly forms of transport. No two plans are the same. The government in their publication 'preparing your organisation for transport in the future: The benefits of Transport Plans' states TPs are a management tool that brings together transport and other business issues in a co-ordinate strategy. TPs are an effective demand management tool, to reduce both the number of trips made by the private car in connection with business and reduce the need to travel".

The objectives within the LTP that relate directly to the authority TP are as follows:

- **to reduce single passenger journeys to the workplace and provide suitable and sustainable alternative methods of travel**
- **to provide a transport infrastructure that allows the people of Thurrock access to employment, education, leisure, and shopping**
- **to provide access for people with impaired mobility**
- **to communicate to the people of the borough, educate them, raise awareness, and promote the use of alternative methods of transport**
- **achieving targets within the transport infrastructure whilst reducing transport effects upon the environment**
- **communicating the need for developers and employers to understand the need to support Transport Plans**

The purpose of the Transport Plan is to provide guidance for developers in the borough and to achieve a balance between transportation progress and the protection of the environment.

3. Background to Travel Plans

Policy guidance for the need of a Transport Plan was presented within the Transport white paper, Road Traffic Reduction Act, and PPG13. The policy highlighted the need to provide suitable travel alternatives and reduce the numbers of transport movements.

Thurrock council seeks to reach agreement with prospective developers concerning the implementation of a TP in association with their development. Such agreements are pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The following is an extract from such an agreement:

"The Owner further for itself and (subject to the other provisions of this Deed) successors in title hereby covenants the Council as follows:

"To provide that every occupier shall within 6 months after the date upon which it first occupies any Building permitted by the Permission submit to the Council for the approval of the Council such approval not be unreasonably withheld or delayed a Transport Plan (TP) which shall contain as many of the provisions detailed in the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions publication " Preparing your Organisation for transport in the Future" " The Benefits of Transport Plans" dated June 1999 as are appropriate to the Department and the Site taking into account the circumstances at the time the identity of the Occupier and the nature of the business undertaken at the Building and further shall include provisions as to how the progress of the TP shall be managed and monitored PROVIDED THAT the Council will if necessary promptly negotiate all such matters with the Occupier but that if the council shall not have commented on the terms of the draft TP within two months of submission the Council shall be deemed to have approved such draft TP and where following negotiation of the draft to the approval of"

4. Targets

The Kyoto Climate Change Conference of 1997 introduced the need to reduce greenhouse emissions to 12.5% below the levels of 1990. It was accepted that radical transportation changes were needed within the borough to reduce these figures to the necessary requirements.

Principal objectives to reducing emissions and enhancing the environment are as follows:

- **reduction in the levels of transport-based emissions within the borough (12.5%)**
- **providing a cleaner and safer environment to live and work within, reducing the negative impacts of transport on the environment**
- **raising awareness levels of the people and businesses in the borough and increasing the transportation choices open to them**
- **offering sustainable transport alternatives**
- **providing a view into the future of Transport Plans**
- **reduction in car parking spaces and maintenance for employers**

5. Development of a Travel Plan

Overall requirements

The requirements of a Travel Plan involve the coming together of set targets reducing the movement of transport and travel within the borough and promoting sustainable alternative options to commuters and developers.

Transportation levels need to be reduced for single person journeys to and from work and to provide more efficient and sustainable methods of travel.

Transport fleets and their movements to be reduced, resulting in a more efficient fleet and reduced transportation costs. The TP will only remain sustainable if strict monitoring is applied.

The use of development land needs to be considered taking into account the effect that any single development may have upon the worker, the transportation infrastructure and the environment.

The opportunity to offer various alternative forms of transportation within the infrastructure of the borough – that is, walking, cycling, public transport, car sharing, telecommunications, and so on.

6. Provision of transport alternatives

As outlined earlier in the document there is a need for alternative transport choices if a TP is to be implemented and sustained successfully.

Individual TP's for unique developments will offer differing methods to encourage the workforce to enter into alternative modes of transport, for example:

Walking – increased provisions of safe lighted paths and benefits

Pedestrian travel is an area with huge benefits within the TP. Look at the benefits of asking those employees who live within 1 mile of the workplace to walk.

Walking holds many health advantages and pedestrians would benefit from reduced stress levels and increased healthy activity while walking to work.

To promote this initiative walk days/weeks could be implemented to raise awareness.

Cycling – increased cycle paths, links and benefits

Implementing increased and improved cycle routes in and around developments will encourage more workers to travel by cycle.

Increased health and reduced stress benefits apply when cycling to work.

Better provisions for the cyclist to store cycles, shower and change will be a major part of the initiative and specific cycle days/weeks will raise awareness. Discounts for cycle purchases will encourage more people to travel by cycle.

All cyclists will be guaranteed a taxi ride home should circumstances dictate a need.

Bus services – provision that is on time, clean and safe, park and ride

The implementation of increased bus services, running on time and providing the commuter with a clean and safe alternative mode of transport. Increased health and reduced stress benefits apply. The service is to provide effective and far reaching routes that do not isolate individuals and the employer should look to implementing discounted tickets to the bus user.

Train Services – provision that is on time, clean and safe

Implementing improved train services that provide a guaranteed clean and safe service adhering to scheduled times. Increased health and reduced stress benefits apply. Employers will offer interest free loans for season tickets.

Car sharing – car pools, car parking, car clubs

The implementation of car sharing schemes within the workplace reveals benefits. Less congestion, reduced travel expenses and less stress. Car sharers will be encouraged with priority car parking spaces and the development of working relationships through the schemes. Employers will also encourage the guaranteed taxi home if the car sharer is unavailable.

Telecommunications – video conferencing for meetings

Implementation of increased videoconferencing for company meetings reduces the need to travel. Meetings can be more easily arranged and increased in number with no additional impact.

Home working – reducing the necessary hours at the workplace

Where possible, workers are encouraged to work from home reducing journeys on the road. Travel to the workplace can be reduced by a pre-determined number of days each week.

Flexible working hours – reducing congestion within peak hours

Increased flexible working hours allows the workplace to be manned over a comprehensive period and provides the opportunity for the worker to commute to work at different times, therefore reducing traffic volume at peak times.

Reduced fleet movements – reducing fleet congestion, trailer fill

Implementation of measures reducing fleet movements to a more environmentally friendly level. Reducing peak time fleet movements and condensing deliveries/haulage to reduce number of fleet movements.

Relocation – offering an incentive to move closer to the workplace

The employer will encourage workers to move closer to their place of work by introducing relocation expenses. This will make it easier for the employer to implement, control and monitor TPs.

Incentives

Many of these alternatives can be accompanied with incentives from the employer to provide encouragement to employees involved. It may be necessary to offer these incentives to promote the TP alternative methods at the beginning of the plan, but as the plan becomes more substantial it will become clear if the incentives can be reduced and if the plan will be self-sustaining.

The implementation of a TP also identifies the employer's willingness to be a responsible and caring member of the community and to openly communicate the desires of the company to the workforce.

7. Monitoring Travel Plans within the workplace

Travel Plan fee explained

The Travel Plan fee covers the assessment of the travel plan prior to the submission of a planning application, the aim of this is to provide a full travel plan service to developers who are required to produce a travel plan as part of their planning application. Thurrock Council will attend an advisory meeting with the site Travel Plan Co-ordinator (TPC) to establish objectives, survey questions, parking standards and an action plan, which will be monitored over the life of the plan, a minimum of five years, this will begin within 6 months of occupation, or when the site becomes active.

Monitoring requirements should only cease when there is sufficient evidence for all parties to be sure that the travel patterns of the development are in line with the objectives of the Travel Plan. This includes meeting the agreed targets over a consistent period. At this point, the Travel Plan would become a voluntary initiative.

With the implementation of TPs it will be necessary to monitor effect and impact. It is necessary to appoint a TP Co-ordinator to ensure that the action points of the TP, as outlined earlier, are adhered to and implemented to achieve the results that the company would expect.

Each TP will be specific to the individual company and will produce specific benefits that need to be monitored. The appointed individual will undertake a role where they can identify the advantages that the TP has provided and communicate this back into the workplace. They can achieve a direct and constant flow of updating information that will provide a base from which the TP can grow and encourage more employees to become involved. A review of this success will need to be annually reported back to the council.

Constant updating information will be made readily available to company employees and those involved within the TP will be encouraged to attend "Communication Groups" such as cyclists and pedestrian groups, and car share groups, offering coffee mornings, providing a positive input and updates for those using the services. Monitoring will keep accountable checks on the numbers of workers involved with the TP and as levels rise or fall it will be necessary to identify areas requiring attention. Implementation of action to rectify areas of concern can be introduced.

Areas to be monitored

The areas where monitoring will be required are outlined in the document under "Provisions for Transport Alternatives" and although all areas may not be comprehensively covered a starting structure is provided.

Monitoring areas are as follows:

- walking
- cycling
- bus services
- train services
- car sharing
- car club usage
- telecommunications
- home working
- flexible working hours
- reduced fleet movement

The above areas provide a fluid interpretation of the effectiveness of the TP and the Co-ordinator will be able to access the individual areas pertinent to the TP that needs attention.

Monitoring of these areas will provide sufficient feedback to implement positive improvements and to increase the numbers of people becoming part of the TP, therefore reducing traffic volume and congestion within the borough.

Implementation of an effective TP will pay dividends for the environment, the company and the individual. Benefits will include reduced road congestion, reduced single person car journeys, increased fitness and health, increased air quality, better local transport services and better alternative travel methods.

The TP will provide local employers and developments with an opportunity to reduce travel congestion within the borough at peak travelling times and provide employees with safe, clean and healthy alternative methods of travelling to work. The TP will be in place for a minimum of five years but could stay in place for as long as deemed necessary.