



# Chapter 7: Planning for Passenger Transport

Streetscape Design Guide 2025

Worcestershire County Council



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# Chapter 7: Planning for Passenger Transport

## 1. Aim

Efficient and affordable passenger transport services are needed to provide essential access to employment, education, healthcare and to other vital services, ensuring everyone can participate fully in society. Efficient public transport can also reduce congestion, lower emissions, improve air quality and contribute to a healthier and more sustainable environment.

The Streetscape Design Guide prioritises the needs of pedestrians, wheelers, cyclists and public transport over cars for shorter journeys in the design of developments. Therefore, the provision of local bus services is important, and Worcestershire County Council recognises and supports the requirement for bus and highway infrastructure for delivering connectivity between new developments, urban centres, major employment sites and other prominent generators of local trips.

Worcestershire County Council requires developers to ensure access is available to high-quality passenger transport facilities and services. This is to optimise travel choice and ensure sustainable development, regardless of whether it is a residential, commercial, or an industrial development.

Several factors can detrimentally affect the operational efficiency of a bus service. These include traffic congestion, inadequate infrastructure, inefficient route planning, and poor parking provision in a development that may obstruct a route (see Streetscape Design Guide Chapter 6 for Planning for Parking).

To strengthen the commercial viability of passenger transport networks, a developer should prioritise creating a development that actively encourages and facilitates the use of public transportation. This involves ensuring the development is well-connected to existing transport options, making it convenient and attractive for residents and visitors to choose public transport over private vehicles. Encouraging sustainable travel choices should include the following important considerations:

1. Quality infrastructure such as secure bicycle storage, well designed bus stops and real-time public transport information with up-to-date timetables to limit wait times, ensure passenger comfort, and assist with journey planning.
2. Developments should be planned with an integrated approach to transport, connecting different modes (e.g., bus, train, bicycle) seamlessly.
3. Developers should engage with the local community to understand their transport needs and preferences.

Developers will be expected to consider passenger transport access at an early stage in the development process, and where relevant, set out a costed passenger transport access strategy for their proposed development.

### 2. Bus Routes

Public transport hubs should also be easily accessible on foot, wheeling mode and by bicycle with excellent interconnectivity.<sup>1</sup>

For bus infrastructure, the position of Worcestershire County Council is aligned with national and local policy as stated below:

- [The National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) 2024](#) (paragraphs 17, 29 and 34), steers development towards promoting its connectivity with sustainable transport to facilitate sustainable development and contribute towards wider sustainability.
- The NPPF (paragraphs 37, 38, 58 and 70) also promotes the integration of planning and sustainable transport to provide attractive alternatives to travelling by car. This is important to provide people with a choice in how they travel to access employment, education, health facilities, leisure, and amenities.
- Worcestershire County Council requests provision and/or improvements to local bus services in association with new development in alignment with the policies established in [Worcestershire County Council's Local Transport Plan \(2018 – 2030\)](#) in respect to promoting public transport connectivity between new development and local amenities; and

### 3. Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

Worcestershire County Council has produced a single [Bus Service Improvement Plan \(BSIP\)](#) covering the full extent of its area. The BSIP sets out the Local Transport Authority's ambition to promote the use of buses across the county.

The BSIP consists of several core principle themes as follows to:

1. Increase the frequency of services on Worcestershire Strategic Network
2. Increase service level patterns to meet the needs of residents
3. Provide alternative forms of transport where normal modes are not cost effective
4. Review current Worcestershire fare structures and consider simpler and lower fare structures
5. Progress to a consistent, uniform, accessible and quality provision of bus infrastructure
6. Provide a safe and secure environment to travel; delivery of next generation mobility hubs to integrate alternative service provision and active travel with local bus services
7. Address operator congestion and pinch-points that can impact bus services.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Chapter 2 for design considerations for Active Travel in accordance with LTN/120.

Worcestershire County Council recognises that ensuring direct, fast, reliable, and punctual bus services are critically important if passenger transport is to offer credible travel options as an alternative to using private vehicles.

### 4. Bus stops and infrastructure

Bus stops and infrastructure such as bus shelters should prioritise accessibility, safety and passenger comfort, whilst ensuring efficient bus operations. This would mean having a development close to or served by a main road or spine road. If only one point of vehicular access is provisioned into a new development, it is unlikely that the bus service will consider it viable, unless the proposal represents a major bus trip generator.

Worcestershire County Council will consider the bus stop infrastructure at each site on a case-by-case basis, including the frequency and type of services planned for that development. The provision and location of bus stops should be planned at an early stage to ensure bus stops are not placed in hazardous areas on the network. Therefore, the following points should be considered:

#### 4.1 Bus stop locations

- Worcestershire County Council proposes a mean average walking distance of 400 metres to the nearest bus stop for all properties within a development. The routes to the bus stops should be safe, direct, convenient, and accessible for people of all abilities.
- However, longer walking distances may be required in rural areas where bus stop provision is less frequent. Distances of up to 800 metres will be considered where a high-quality, direct, and level route is provided to the nearest bus stop if a mean average distance of 400 metres is not possible.
- This distance is to be measured accurately from the front door to a bus stop, and not by drawing a radius on a map (i.e. as 'the crow flies'). Measurements should assume that residents will make use of planned walking routes within the development.
- Parking provision in a development must be carefully designed to ensure there are no obstructions to cause a detriment to bus service operational efficiency. Bus priority measures may be required to support this, and these should be specifically designed and discussed with the Development Management Team in advance of application submission.

#### 4.2 Bus Route Designs

- Bus routes should not be required to make circuitous detours into residential areas, as this increases travel time and reduces the attractiveness of bus routes.
- Bus routes within new developments should be designed to be continuous (i.e. they pass directly through the development or operate in a loop).
- Developments must not require bus services to make any unnecessary manoeuvres, so bus turning facilities should never be required.

### 4.3 Accessibility

- Bus stops should be located on a footway. The footway width behind the bus stop should be a minimum of 1.5 metres or 2 metres for high footfall areas and be designed to be accessible to people with wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other mobility aids.
- The bus stop must be clearly marked on all plans, well in advance of construction and brought to the attention of potential householders, to avoid any problems when a bus service starts later than initial occupations.
- Bus stops provided on, or adjacent to existing highway networks should be placed as close as possible to existing footways which provide access into the development.
- Bus shelters should provide a comfortable waiting area and be designed for easy access, visibility to the bus with clear information. It should have a non-slip and well drained surface.
- For new bus shelters that are to be put forward for adoption by Worcestershire County Council, a Commuted Sum may be sought from developers to support ongoing maintenance of this infrastructure asset. At some bus stop locations, the provision of new cycle parking, to encourage 'cycle & ride', may be appropriate, but these plans must be discussed and agreed with Worcestershire County Council in advance. Full details of the bus shelter maintenance policy can be found in the [Transport Asset Management Plan](#).

Large-phased developments (residential and employment) require careful planning for public transport, including bus services, to ensure the area remains accessible and sustainable. Bus services can be integrated into the development in many ways, including extending existing routes, adding new ones, and implementing bus priority measures such as bus lanes or dedicated bus routes. Where bus routes are proposed to operate through developments, these should be agreed in advance with the proposed bus operating company, and should offer direct, unimpeded access through the site to minimise any impact on journey times.

A developer contribution for bus infrastructure may be required to help fund improvements or enhancements to the public bus network, typically as a condition of a planning permission. This funding helps mitigate the impact of a development on the local bus service, ensuring it can accommodate the increased demand generated by the development.

### 5. Home to School Transport

Provisions are contained within the Education Act (1996) relating to the provision of Home to School transport services. These provisions confer a duty upon the Local Highway Authority to provide Home to School transport. In cases where there is such a duty to provide transport, Worcestershire County Council will provide this free of charge. Pupils can also be awarded transport assistance, as appropriate, for the needs identified within their Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans. For students with a personalised educational healthcare plan, this may identify the need for free transport or funded assistance to access their nearest suitable place of education.

It is appropriate for those pupils beyond a walking distance defined by Section 444(5) of the Education Act 2006, which includes two miles for under-eights and three miles for those of eight

years and over. Should a new residential development qualify under this Act, Section 106 contributions will be calculated and requested at a planning application stage.

### 6. Community Transport

Worcestershire benefits from a comprehensive network of Community Transport schemes, which provide passenger transport services to those who are unable to access scheduled passenger transport services, for a variety of reasons. Supported by the Transport Act (1985), Worcestershire County Council will consider the requirements for new Community Transport services to meet the transport needs of the elderly and disabled, especially if anticipated site gradients in the area impact on their ability to access bus stops. This will consider the distance of residents from hospitals and the policy of the local Health Trust. Using data available from the Worcestershire Community Transport Partnership, the Worcestershire Concessionary Travel Scheme and HMRC, Section 106 contributions from applicants may be requested where appropriate.

### 7. Rail

Where a development is adjacent to a railway line or other rail infrastructure (stations, sidings, freight facilities), the developer should consult with Network Rail at an early stage. Contact details and procedures for such consultation can be obtained from the Network Rail website [Network Rail](#). Worcestershire County Council's policies for rail are included in its Local Transport Plan. Where development is expected to generate additional demand for rail travel, and improvement schemes are identified, financial contributions may be sought to support bringing forward their delivery. Where a development is adjacent to a railway station, developers should contact the relevant Train Operating Company responsible for managing that station. If in doubt, developers are advised to contact the Development Management team for advice at the earliest opportunity.