

Managing Space Strategy



Warwickshire
County Council

Overview

We want to ensure that the physical space available to Warwickshire County Council is used to provide travel choices that align with the goals set out in the Council Plan and Core Strategy.

Local transport options should meet the needs of Warwickshire's residents, visitors and businesses without having a negative impact on the environment and people's wellbeing. We need to prioritise the use of available space to promote alternatives to the car; sustainability will be at the heart of our Local Transport Plan. This approach will deliver route and place-based solutions, serving the needs of each unique community. Our countryside, villages and towns will be cleaner, greener and healthier places to be.

Consultation with Warwickshire residents shows that key themes such as the environment and wellbeing are priorities. To reflect this, some focus will need to be given to reducing dependency on private car usage. Where appropriate, space may be given over to other forms of transport, to encourage active travel options, which will have the combined benefits of improving people's physical and mental wellbeing, addressing climate change and reducing air pollution.

Examples of such interventions may include changes to parking management in town centres in favour of additional, safe cycle or pedestrian routes, while maintaining access for users with disabilities and considering the needs of business. Clean Air Zones could save the UK economy £1.6 billion annually by tackling air pollution, reducing premature deaths and sickness days, and improving workplace productivity.

"I like the wording 'without having negative impact on the environment and wellbeing'. It makes me feel I've been taken into consideration".

Citizens' Panel member



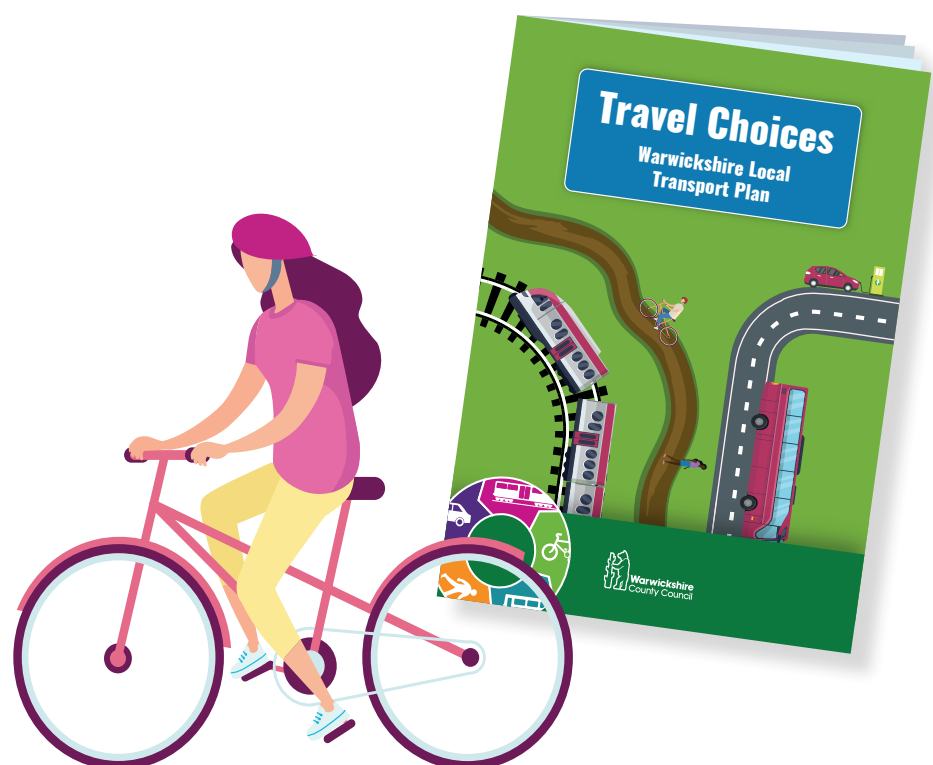
Planning and Development

Transport planning is not a standalone activity and WCC recognises the need to engage with partner organisations and communities.

We will work with planning colleagues to deliver changes to our roads and public spaces which promote sustainable development, effective and vibrant local economies and communities, and a range of travel choices. The Council will seek to benefit from changes to how local transport infrastructure is delivered – identifying new funding opportunities which will allow the county to grow economically in a sustainable way.

Central government's National Planning Policy is clear that significant development should give priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with town and street design that favours walkways and cycle paths over motor traffic.

Changing how Warwickshire's land is used for travel to create a modern, fit-for-purpose transport system will be central to this part of the Local Transport Plan. In line with central government direction, WCC needs to take bold decisions around allocation of space to create a better Warwickshire for everyone. We will seek to establish community support for changes which provide benefits for as many users as possible.



Routes

WCC will maintain an effective network of routes throughout the county, which will include options for travel by road, rail, air and waterway, and by all types of users. Where these are not directly controlled by WCC, we will use our influence to bring about the changes which work for Warwickshire.

The county has a wide range of communities and travel users, many of which have unique demands on the transport network. Within the context of our four key themes, WCC will provide an integrated transport service which will be fit for a modern, clean, carbon Net Zero UK.

Transport remains at the heart of a functioning economy. We want to continue to support Warwickshire's economy by improving accessibility to jobs, allowing the movement of freight, supporting the delivery of new infrastructure and services, and by making the County an outstanding location for business.

Our aim will be to reduce congestion on our road network, removing barriers to productivity, supporting jobs and improving health and wellbeing by promoting safe active travel choices.



Places

We want to improve Warwickshire's towns, villages and countryside for their users. We recognise that many communities are unique and have their own travel concerns.

More rural locations are heavily dependent on private cars and this is unlikely to change significantly. In these locations, a switch to electric vehicles is likely to be the most significant change during the lifetime of the LTP, together with a reduced need to travel as a result of more home-working and home deliveries. However, we want to improve rural public transport as a key part of moves towards Net Zero.

In larger places, more substantial changes may be required, which will help to facilitate moves towards public transport and active travel options, such as walking and cycling. This may also involve changes to local areas that can improve air quality, reduce noise and make travel safer around schools by managing traffic.



Managing Space Policies

Policy Position MS1

Increasing sustainable development and travel

WCC will encourage sustainable development through the promotion of public and community transport, the provision of cycling and pedestrian facilities and traffic management measures. Where feasible and appropriate, and in collaboration with local communities, space will be allocated to more sustainable travel options.

Working with communities, the district and borough councils, external organisations and developers, we will use our influence to put pressure on how new developments are shaped, so that the transport options which serve them are as environmentally beneficial as possible. We will take evidence-based decisions which may include requirements for transport assessments, travel plans, modelling assessments and other appropriate data.

Policy Position MS2

Travel options which are accessible to all

We want Warwickshire's residents and visitors to be able to travel around the county in safety and for transport options to be accessible to all. In its role as Highway Authority, WCC will strive to ensure that all developments are accessible, that designs and layouts contribute to the local area and that improved connectivity to footways, cycleways and public transport are incorporated.

Policy Position MS3

Prioritising use of space to promote sustainable travel options

Warwickshire is a diverse semi-rural county, with small villages and medium-sized towns surrounded by large areas of countryside. Transport interventions will therefore recognise the need to tailor solutions according to individual community needs within an overall framework of sustainability and economic success.

In more urban areas, space will be prioritised to promote public transport, cycling and walking and to facilitate non-polluting private vehicle transport. Reduced car dependency is a key aspiration in places where this is appropriate without adversely affecting people's lives. Communities where all daily amenities are within easy reach within 15 minutes are appropriate for promoting cycling and walking to reduce car use.

Interventions may include:

- parking changes including Park & Ride and Park & Stride provision
- charging points for EVs – on-street and in hubs, in line with the UK Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy
- low emission zones
- low traffic neighbourhoods and/or pedestrianisation where appropriate
- managing traffic around schools
- safer cycling and walking routes
- increased transport connectivity between types of public transport e.g. bus interchanges
- future technology – autonomous vehicles; drone landing spaces; hubs for short, local goods deliveries using low carbon options



"These are great ideas, but the overall cost to the end user must be worthwhile, provide value for money and be convenient all at the same time".

Citizens' Panel member

Policy Position MS4

Robust data-led decision making in assessing new developments

We will take evidence-based decisions which may include requirements from developers for transport assessments, travel plans, modelling assessments and other appropriate data. These decisions require specific technical data, such as the use of micro-simulation modelling techniques to support Transport Assessments, where appropriate, in accordance with our Modelling Protocol. The Council will publish and regularly review this protocol, and will work with applicants to assess the individual requirements for the sites/areas being developed.

Policy Position MS5

Construction to best available standards

We will ensure that new highways, including those built by developers, are constructed to the best available standards. Developers will be expected to follow the Warwickshire Design Guide, which provides details of build quality. We will use appropriate legal agreements to ensure that developer-built roads are of sufficient standard to be adopted by the Council as a public highway. WCC-commissioned highways will abide by the Construction Design Framework, which embeds carbon reduction and climate change into our contract work.

Policy Position MS6

Influencing Planning Authorities and Developers

WCC does not have responsibility for planning decisions concerning most types of development. However, we are consulted on most development proposals and will use these opportunities to influence and support development in ways which provide better, safer, more sustainable transport options. We will use this influence to maintain efficient travel on major roads in the county, for example by minimising new accesses to the Major Road Network, avoiding journeys being rerouted through neighbourhoods, which would impact negatively on congestion, air quality and the local environment.

Using planning law, we will create binding legal agreements that require developers to make contributions with the aim of improving travel infrastructure in the county.

We will continue to require contributions from developers which include: road safety audits; school travel plans and promoting safer routes to schools; encouraging better walking and cycling connections and accessibility for disabled people; transport assessments or transport statements for new developments.

