

# 'HOW TO' COMPANION GUIDE



ASSOCIATION OF TRAIN OPERATING COMPANIES

## GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT FOR STATIONS

June 2014

**ATOC**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Several recent documents and government policies emphasise the need to plan sustainable access to stations. The Department for Transport's Door-to-Door Strategy (March 2013), ATOC and Rail Safety Standards Board (RSSB) Guidance on Station Travel Plans (July 2013) and the Cycle-Rail Toolkit (July 2012) all encourage a more integrated approach towards the customer journey as part of a seamless door-to-door experience. These are also supplemented by a growing number of mode-specific ATOC guides covering issues such as Taxi Share and Motorcycle Parking. Proactive development of station travel plans, including the provision of tailored cycling solutions in line with the Rail Industry Sustainable Development Principles.

All these documents place cycling and station travel planning investment centre stage. They are now central to the way we stimulate opportunities for customers to choose rail travel and key to increasing passenger numbers and improving passenger experience. This has been reiterated in the latest round of franchise tender documents specifying requirements relating to cycling, accessibility and wider station travel planning, for instance: the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern (TSGN) and Essex Thameside procurement processes.

In order to deliver sustainable access to stations, it is vital to plan ahead, making sure that station development schemes (improvement/refurbishment/rebuilds and new-builds) get the sustainable travel solution right first time in their approach, design and delivery. This 'How To' companion guide sits alongside the technical Development Management Guidance and explains the roles of TOCs and local authorities to ensure that together as a team, the organisations work to deliver a sustainable railway.

## 2. WHY IS THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE NEEDED?

Despite the recent focus on sustainable travel improvements, some renovations and building programmes still fail to address station access issues in a holistic way, and individual schemes miss the opportunity to ensure 'access for all' is embedded in the planning process.

The Development Management Guidance supports and references good practice documentation including ATOC's guidance on Station Travel Plans and the Cycle-Rail Toolkit and also echoes the Rail Industry Sustainable Development Principles, particularly those aspects dealing with customer choice, accessibility and the door-to-door journey.

## 3. GETTING IT RIGHT FIRST TIME

The Cycle-Rail Working Group has already delivered around £30 million of investment to enhance cycling access and egress across the UK rail network through a partnership approach. More than 350 stations have been earmarked for improvements, many of which have been delivered. By the end of 2015, the amount of cycle parking will have nearly tripled across the UK rail network from the 23,500 facilities in place at the end of 2009. Requirements by DfT in future franchise agreements are likely to further bolster these facilities, however provision for appropriate sustainable transport in all new, renovated or improved stations will also be key in ensuring adequate and appropriate amenities are available at stations.

This investment highlights the importance of getting cycling and sustainable transport measures at stations right first time and maintaining facilities in line with demand, rather than retrofitting. Whilst these resources will make a big difference to cycle-rail as part of a door-to-door journey, station enhancement and development schemes must plan in STP and cycle measures correctly from the outset. This means looking at these issues early enough in the planning process.

Failure to include decisions about cycle provision and wider sustainable transport investment in the planning process will weaken the chance of sustainable transport modes being used to access the station and ultimately lead to a need for retrofit solutions.

Station travel planning, if used correctly, operates as a catalyst for a wider range of measures to benefit pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, bus and taxi users, disabled customers and so on. The evidence base for doing this is growing, and with the use of DfT Local Sustainable Transport Fund projects to achieve 'soft' and 'hard' multi-modal solutions, we can expect further success stories to emerge where local authorities, TOCs and Network Rail have collaborated to make the link to the station easier.

This edition of the Development Management Guidance focuses on cycling (mainly due to the evidence base), but many of the principles and advance thinking in the planning process can apply to any mode of travel. The key is to properly assess how any one scheme or project plugs into the wider context and what else needs to happen to make that component a success.

We also recommend that as part of any STP scheme, stakeholders involved in access and mobility (e.g. local authority Access officer, local disability groups) and wider equality issues are scoped out, identified and contacted to ensure they embrace the due diligence requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.

The guidance outlines the importance of the TOC/Network Rail in self-screening development proposals to optimise accessibility for equality groups and highlights the role of local authorities in further screening and innovation at the planning stage.

## 4. EXPLAINING THE SCOPE OF THE GUIDANCE

To help government and the railway industry to plan ahead, the Development Management Guidance covers two specific areas:

- Station Travel Plans – when and where they should be developed according to station size, function, opportunity to promote sustainable travel; and
- Cycle facilities – according to the type of scheme, station function and opportunity to change mode of travel to and from the station.

It is expected that these guidelines will be instigated from the start of the planning process, through options/outline design and Network Rail GRIP stages, where applicable, and become an integral part of planning applications for new stations and enhancement schemes. If these assessments are missed out of the scoping and planning processes then it would be for the local authorities or Network Rail scheme manager to pick them up as part of their consideration of planning applications, and apply the guidance as part of their development management toolbox.

## 5. EXPLAINING THE ROLE OF THE TOCs AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES

There are two key audiences that the technical guidance is designed to help:

TOCs – For future improvements at stations (some of which may not need planning permission).

The benefits for the TOC include:

- Accurate and timely delivery on franchise commitments
- Opportunities to grow and maximise footfall
- Improved customer satisfaction scores
- Clear STP strategies in place ahead of scheme implementation.

Local Authorities – The guidelines can be embedded into local authority development plans and any relevant development control guidance to ensure opportunities to enhance sustainable transport are not missed. They should also be used by the local authority's development management team to respond to individual planning applications submitted by the TOC/Network Rail as part of the 'live' planning process to ensure that both provision and connectivity issues are optimised.

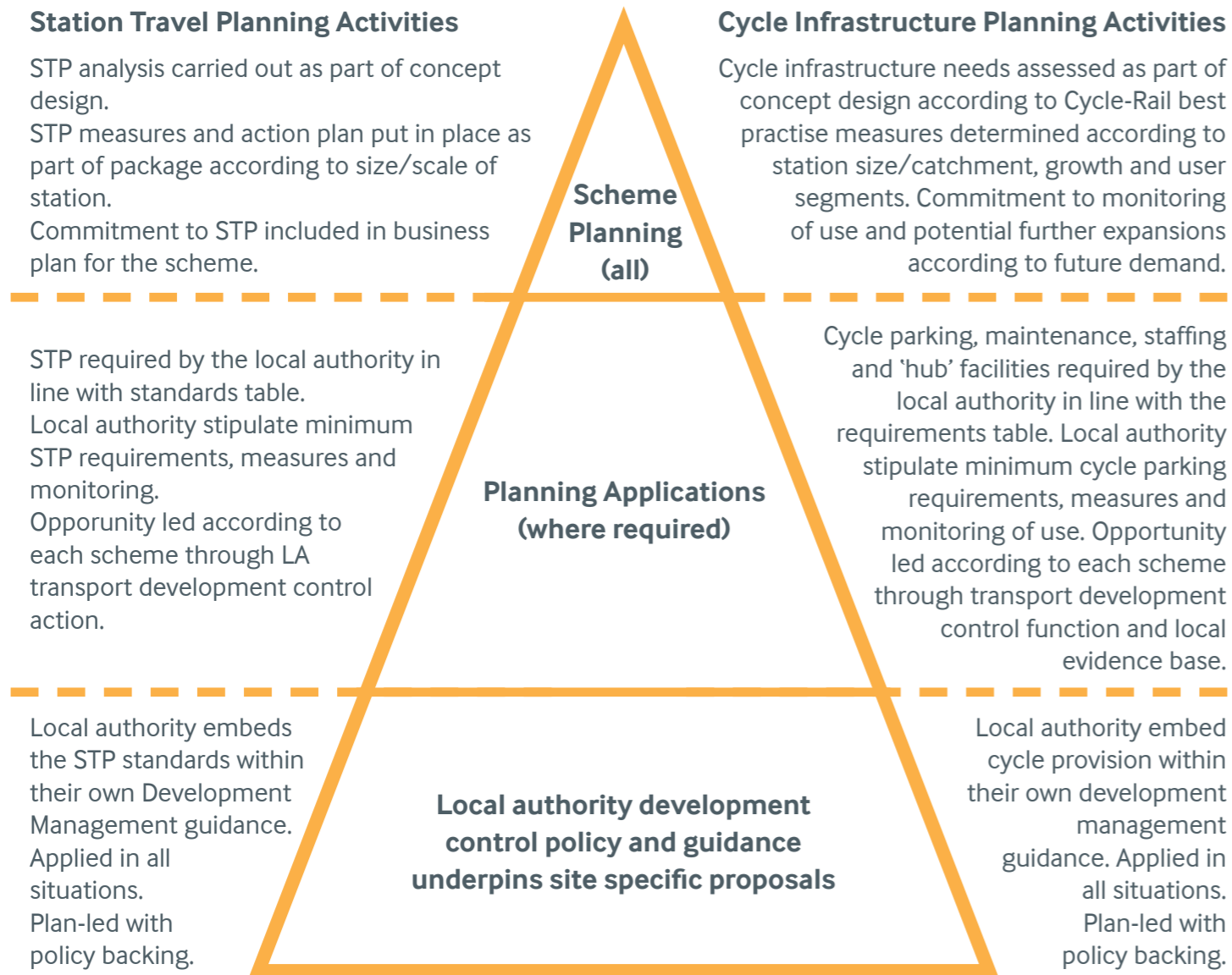
The benefits for the local authority include:

- Delivery of sustainable travel mode shift targets (linked to their Local Transport Plans and also Local Sustainable Transport Fund schemes)
- Optimisation of development management funds (CIL, Section 106, Section 278) secured from other sources
- Creation of sustainable links and safer routes to stations

Figure 1 below shows how these requirements fit with the wider planning process, so that at both policy and scheme level, every £1 invested in sustainable transport provision is spent on the right solution, in the right way and does not require remedial action.

Figure 1: Station Development Schemes

**Station Development Schemes: ensuring sustainable transport opportunities are not missed**

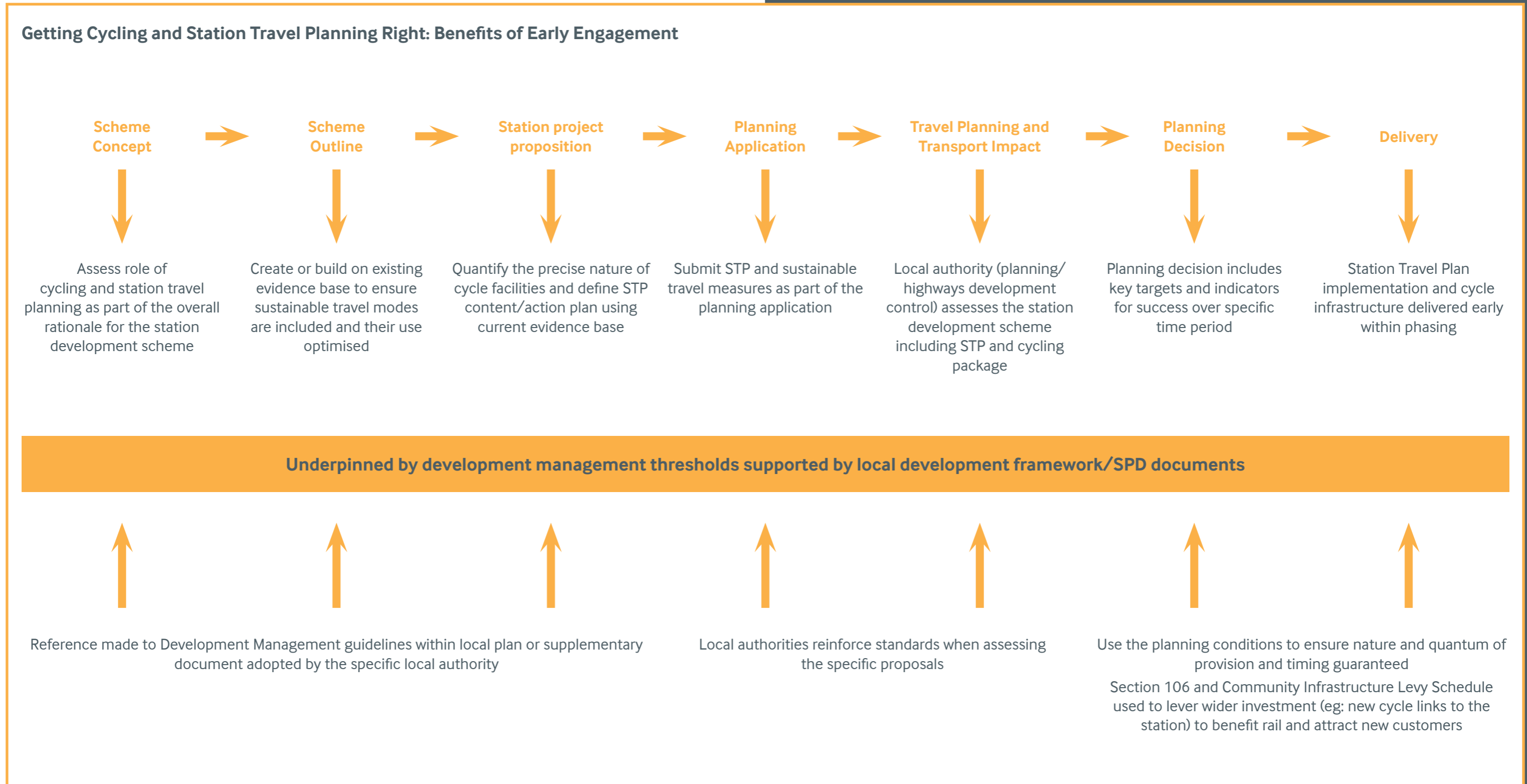


Whilst funding for many sustainable transport measures may come direct from TOCs (i.e. as part of a franchise commitment) or through specific DfT funding streams, it should be clear that station travel planning and access to stations are partnership issues and responsibilities for their delivery and funding may fall across several organisations. This issue is discussed in detail in the Station Travel Plan Guidance.

There are major benefits in thinking ahead, particularly where the opportunity to put in place an effective travel plan or cycling investment may change the scope of a station enhancement scheme. This would also be true where the local authority has its own plans to improve cycle routes, pedestrian links from the station to new residential developments or to work with employers close to a station on travel plans. Local authorities will need to consider any distance/catchment thresholds they wish to apply locally to attract funding, for example, for housing developments within a two-mile radius of a station.

Whilst there is a need for the rail industry to take on board the principles as a natural part of future projects, it is also the responsibility of local authorities to help deliver these measures in partnership. As such, they should ensure the principles are embedded within their own local planning documents. These can either be linked to key policies within the local development framework or as part of supplementary planning documents dealing with travel plans, parking or other transport aspects. This means that the opportunity to get it right first time is covered both within the rail industry's own scheme planning practices and at the planning stage, maximising potential demand and the opportunity to promote sustainable travel for the specific location as explained in Figure 2 on the next page:

Figure 2: Getting Cycling and Station Travel Planning right



## 6. PLANNING CONDITIONS/OBLIGATIONS ON STATION SITES

Note that the local authority can choose to use planning conditions or Section 106 or 278 'obligations' dependent on the scale and scope of proposals. 'Planning conditions' will normally be used where there is a defined scheme (e.g. 100 secure cycle spaces and bike hire building) located entirely within the TOC's operational lease area and which can be specified through a clearly worded Planning Condition. Section 106 or 278 agreements are usually used in more complex circumstances.

For Section 106 funding to be secured, a third-party development must relate to the station (in planning terms) and the contribution requirement must pass a rigorous reasonableness test for a planning obligation to be applied. For example, 150 houses built 1/4 of a mile from a station, without a safe footway, could reasonably be asked to contribute towards such a scheme. But a new development of 15 houses 10 miles away from the station would not pass the test. For further guidance on this issue, please refer to the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 204), which explains the relationship the site must have to the proposed infrastructure improvement.

## 7. THE PLANNING SYSTEM AS A THIRD PARTY FUNDING MECHANISM FOR STATION ACCESS SCHEMES

Many local authorities are using the Community Infrastructure Levy route to quantify the scale and cost of all the physical infrastructure improvements needed to enhance public transport, walking and cycling accessibility in their local area. This is then passed onto developers as a tariff charge per unit of development. This requires local authorities and TOCs to work together closely to ensure that key assets such as new cycle or pedestrian links to stations, improved lighting schemes etc, are all accounted for in the CIL calculation. Section 106 monies for the same specific transport infrastructure scheme cannot be pooled from more than five developments, so it is important for any strategic connections to be built into the CIL assessment.

## 8. LOOKING FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES/ PLANNING FOR GROWTH

When considering the use of station travel plans, it is important to look at the role of the station and its potential for growth as well as the local authority's aspiration with its strategic plans and policies. Each station travel plan will need to cater for different markets and therefore forward planning should take place in parallel with any new station or major enhancement scheme. Where a local authority is proposing to enhance access to stations, this is another trigger to start planning early.

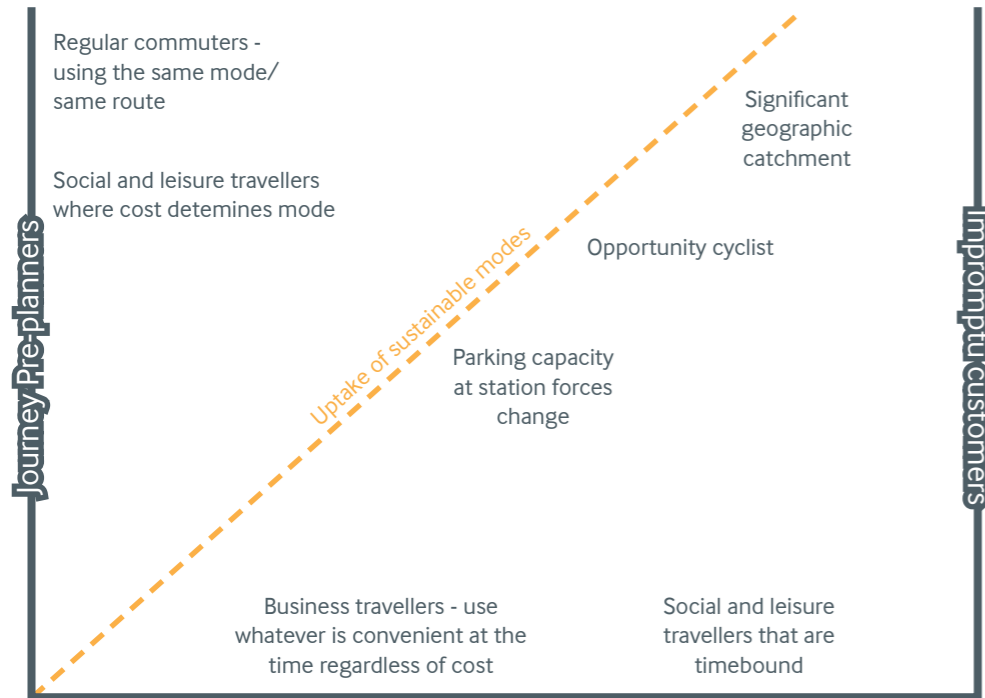
Where new housing or employment development is likely to occur, these should also be recognised in the scheme planning process. Off-site sustainable travel measures which fall outside the station boundary should be delivered and funded via local transport strategies or development control contributions through the relevant property developer. However, maximum opportunity should be taken to promote sustainable transport options as a natural part of schemes funded through the National Stations Improvement Programme (NSIP), Access for All (AfA) or other rail sector-funded projects.

## 9. IDENTIFYING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

As part of the forward planning process, the scheme proposer should examine the key market segments that currently, or will in the future, use the new facility. This will inform the variety of station travel plan measures likely to have most impact on mode shift on the journey to/from the station, and the unlocking of these additional rail trips.

This means recognising the difference between meeting the needs of rail users who will regularly plan their travel and those who will only change behaviour when the correct opportunity arises. This market profile is different for each station location, and as part of the planning proves it is vital to examine the customer evidence base, particularly for the larger schemes. This will ensure that the mix of solutions is targeted to the correct audience (see Figure 3), and also enable other expansion projects, such as car parking, to co-exist alongside the sustainable transport solutions upon which this guidance focuses.

Figure 3: Matching the right intervention to the right audience



Existing guidance provides a useful starting point in identifying the requirement to support different sizes of STP. But this is open to subjective interpretation, so it is necessary to provide more detail about the timing and key features of STPs, as well as the market they need to target. Careful consideration must be given as to whether the station deals with a strong 'tidal' flow or operates as a 'round the clock' interchange, where travellers are using the facility as an 'origin', 'destination' or 'interchange' as part of their journeys. This will dictate the level and type of facilities needed. This guidance sets out a clear baseline to both the industry and the local planning and highway authorities of minimum requirements.

The flow chart diagram below (Figure 4) clearly shows the sequence of developing a station travel plan, ensuring that the evidence base is available at the right stage in the planning process.

Figure 4: Dovetailing the station travel process alongside station development schemes

| RSSB/ATOC Station Travel Plan Process (2013) |  | How to maximise opportunity   |
|--|--|---|
| Station Travel Plan Step                     | Description  |   |
| Station selection                            | Identify stations where STPs will be needed alongside development projects   | Consider the TOC network and where the key investment will be made in stations and also by third party developers   |
| Establishing a partnership                   | Coordinate locally between stakeholders<br>Identify local staff resources<br>Identify potential funding sources<br>Identify and agree strategic priorities, driven by franchise commitments, LTP etc | Development of partnerships including local authorities and developers, so that those responsible for securing CIL/Section 106 and other development management contributions have visibility of your strategy  |
| Information gathering                        | Collect detailed information to support options  | Carry out travel plan customer surveys and route audits to make sure the scheme takes full account of sustainable transport needs, involving rail user and wider community groups   |
| Problem Identification                       | Assess 'gaps' and identify local problems and priorities for improvement   | Gap analysis covers issues 'at station' and 'to station' from customer surveys, audit work and other consultative work  |
| Assess options and opportunities             | Consider different options for access improvements covering a range of potential multi-modal solutions   | Prior to final scheme design and planning application submission, ensure that the solution for the station is the best it can be for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users etc. Ensure you have built for future demand, not against rigid standards.   |
| Developing the Action Plan                   | Develop a plan for implementation of selected options<br>Set targets   | The STP Action Plan should be supportive of the infrastructure enhancements planned, and demonstrate how 'softer' measures will be put in place to promote and optimise their use. The STP Action Plan could be specifically required as a condition attached to a planning permission                |
| STP Implementation                           | Implement station access improvements<br>Communication of the benefits   | Package of measures delivered which can include 'on-station' and 'to-station' improvements.   |
| Monitoring and review                        | Collect information on the effect of improvements<br>Assess against targets<br>Consider future improvements  | Collate STP monitoring information to assess success of the scheme and its usage. Ensure that there are measures in place to uplift usage or expand the facility to meet demand Collect quantitative and qualitative feedback; note this monitoring requirement can be linked to a planning condition |



## 10. MAKING EFFECTIVE USE OF THE GUIDELINES

Adoption of these principles is a natural progressive step in the development of quality station travel planning and cycle provision. They represent a common sense approach to maximising the use of sustainable transport modes and ensure that the key essentials are planned into new schemes right from their outset.

As an industry, we can easily build these guidelines into project rationale and evaluate the impact of sustainable travel measures early on in project planning. But ultimately, local planning and transport authorities will have the ability to insist on these levels of provision as part of their suite of planning guidance, mainstreaming them into their own daily development management practices.

## 11. WHERE TO GET HELP AND ADVICE

For more information on development management and best practice in general, please contact:

ATOC's Integrated Transport Section  
2nd Floor, 200 Aldersgate Street,  
London EC1A 4HD.

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