

**THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2014, AM & PM**

**Matter 1: Transport & digital communications (BDP policies TP37-45)**

**Main issue: Are the Plan's policies towards transport and digital communications justified and effective?**

**Questions:**

**1) Should policy TP37 refer to the reallocation of road space to more sustainable transport modes?**

The West Midlands Local Transport Plan (LTP) supports priority for public transport. Paragraph 9.4 of the Development Plan Connectivity chapter give specific reference to the need for a hierarchy that favours sustainable modes of transport. It also proposes that any development of the transport network will need to consider the impact of schemes on different road users and take this hierarchy into account to resolve competing demands.

The WMITA is supportive of this approach but as stated in our previous representation, we would welcome such statements to be given greater policy support as it will ensure full alignment with WMITA Integrated Transport Prospectus 2013 and LTP3.

**3) Should policy TP39 include a requirement for cycling facilities to be provided in new development (as policy TP38 does for walking)?**

**4) Does policy TP39 make adequate provision for cycle parking, including at railway stations and other important destinations?**

The Local Transport Plan promotes Smarter Choices and persuading people away from using the car when there is a viable alternative. A main component of this is promoting "active" modes of travel like cycling and walking, which have both environmental and health benefits.

TP39 provides a sound set of policies geared towards the implementation of good quality cycling facilities and services across the city.

As per our previous representations and in line with national legislation, new developments and regeneration projects must provide:

- Walking and cycling routes that are convenient, accessible, safe, comfortable and attractive
- Secure, high quality cycle parking that is close to destinations and undercover.
- Layouts that minimise the distance required to walk to public transport connections and clear signposting through a development

Wherever possible, development should link to Birmingham's existing and proposed cycle network and seek to extend and enhance these. All growth areas should also improve walking and cycling access to public transport interchanges including key railway connections.

Considering the above we would welcome the inclusion of policy support in both TP38 & TP39 that specifically requires new development to consider the provision of good quality walking and cycling infrastructure and facilities including cycle parking at key interchange facilities including rail.

**5) Is the support given by policy TP40 to the Camp Hill Chords and a new station at Soho Road justified?**

**Camp Hill Chords**

The West Midlands ITA is supportive of the reopening of the Camp Hill and Sutton Park railway lines to passenger services, but this is reliant on the delivery of the Camp Hill Chords in order to allow services to access Moor Street station. The Camp Hill Chords is a complex project, requiring significant land take and the promotion of a formal Transport and Works Act Order.

Notwithstanding the above we would still welcome policy support in TP40 for Camp Hill Chords as it will provide:

- significant additional transport network capacity into Central Birmingham for both local and longer distance services from the East Midlands, Worcestershire and beyond
- direct access to HS2 via Moor St Station

**Soho Road Rail Station and proposed All Saints Metro Station**

A new Station at Soho Road would not be supported. Essentially, given the proximity to Midland Metro stops in this area and the frequent tram services to Birmingham/West Bromwich, it is highly unlikely that a business case could be made for any new rail station in this area.

In practical terms, the only train that runs on this line is the half-hourly fast service between Birmingham and Walsall/Rugeley.

Any additional station calls on this service would disbenefit passengers between Birmingham and Walsall and there is very limited capacity for any additional trains on the route into Birmingham New St.

Significantly, for operational and track capacity reasons, the Birmingham - Walsall/Rugeley services generally only uses this line in **one direction** (returning via the alternative rail route through Aston) so even if these trains were to call at Soho Rd there would be no return service.

As a result we maintain that the best option for travel from the Soho Rd area remains the high-frequency Midland Metro service which from 2015 will provide connectivity to **both** Birmingham Snow Hill and New Street stations and also direct access to Corporation Street. In the longer term, the Metro should also provide direct access to HS2 and the Curzon development area – something which would not be possible with a heavy rail service from a Soho Rd station.

Considering the above the WMITA remains firm in its view and therefore still requests the removal of a new station at Soho Road from Policy TP40.

MOD115 suggests a new Metro Station at All Saints and MOD124 suggests showing this Metro Station on the Proposals Map. During 2012 and as part of the business case review for Metro Line 1 extension into the City Centre, Centro have carried out further technical assessment for the viability of a new Metro Station at All Saints. The revised business case did not support the introduction of a new stop, but Centro has agreed to defer any decisions regarding this proposal until after the implementation of the City Centre Metro Extension scheme.

The current wording in the Rapid Transit section of Policy TP40 “the development and expansion of metro/ rapid transit to facilitate improvement / enhancement in the public transport offer on key corridors and to facilitate access to development and employment will be supported”. The WMITA feels that such wording provides flexibility and does not preclude the introduction of new stops such as All Saints along existing and new Rapid Transit corridors.

**6) Should additional rapid transit routes, and the need for improvements to Five Ways station, be referred to in policy TP40?**

For consistency and to assist in delivery, all Sprint/Rapid Transit Routes and other significant public transport schemes (as acknowledged in the Integrated Transport Prospectus and Birmingham’s Draft Mobility Action Plan) should be referenced in this policy section (Policy TP40). All public transport schemes (including Sprint/Rapid Transit Routes) as mentioned in individual Area Action Plans should also be fully embedded in the Development Plan. The following Sprint/ Rapid Transit Routes should include:

- Five Ways to the New St – Centenary Square Metro Extension
- Birmingham City Centre – Bartley Green
- Birmingham City Centre – Walsall
- Birmingham City Centre – Airport (via East Birmingham)
- Birmingham City Centre – Airport (via A45)

The WMITA through Centro is currently undertaking a number of technical studies aimed at the delivery of the above corridors and therefore we still request for the inclusion of such rapid transit proposals in policy TP40. A brief update on emerging rapid transit connections in the city is provided below for information.

**Five Ways to the New St – Centenary Square Metro Extension**

Funding is in place from the Birmingham City Centre Enterprise Zone Investment Plan and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) to deliver the next stage of the works authorised by the 2005 BCCE Order, from Stephenson Street to Centenary Square.

**Metro extension to Eastside (HS2 Station)**

Currently and as part of the recently announced Growth Deal announcements for the GBSLEP (Greater Birmingham Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership), Government allocated provisional funding for a further extension from Stephenson Street to Eastside serving the

proposed HS2 Curzon street to Eastside Digbeth to Adderley Street plus Sprint along Hagley Road and A45 corridors.

**7) Should policy TP41 include reference to the *West Midlands Metropolitan Freight Strategy* and Centro's Urban Road Freight Network?**

**8) Should policy TP41 include specific proposals to limit the size of goods delivery vehicles in some areas?**

The Integrated Transport Authority is the statutory authority responsible for the development and promotion of strategic transport strategy for the metropolitan area. These duties cover all forms of transport and network types including highways. The Urban Road Freight Network (URFN ) was developed by the ITA and supported by Birmingham City Council to help support the movement of road freight between large centres, industrial areas, major developments, freight terminals and motorway junctions. The URFN will look to ensure greater levels of journey reliability whilst also ensuring the safety of other road users. The URFN is intended to ensure road freight movements do not unnecessarily access residential areas to improve safety and well being. To support this, it would be beneficial to have the following wording included in Policy TP41 as an additional bullet point:

"They have Compatibility with the ITA Metropolitan Freight Strategy proposals for urban freight including the Urban Road Freight Network. The Urban Road Freight Network has been developed to better regulate and manage road freight movements across the West Midlands"

**11) Should policy TP44 or its explanatory text include specific reference to Centro's accessibility standards?**

Proposed Modification MOD 117 is welcomed. This will ensure consistency with Centro's Accessibility Standards and other west Midlands Authority's plans. This will in turn provide clarity across the west Midlands region and help to ensure good access to the sustainable transport network.