



Telford & Wrekin
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TravelTelford



Telford & Wrekin Transport Plan

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal Non-Technical Summary 2027-2041

Draft for consultation



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Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) Report of the Telford and Wrekin Transport Plan 2027-2041 (TWTP). The purpose of this Non-Technical Summary is to set out the ISA process and the outcomes derived from this and is intended to inform those who have a general interest in the TWTP, but who are not concerned with its detailed technical assessment. Readers are advised to refer to the full contents of the ISA Report for more detailed information if required.

Whilst it is important that the TWTP delivers the vision for transport in Telford and Wrekin, it is also important that this is done in a way which protects the environment, protects the health and quality of life of the people who live in the borough as well as those who visit, and allows as many different people as possible the same opportunities for accessing the facilities and services they require whilst promoting sustainable economic growth. Therefore, the TWTP has been subjected to a series of assessments that cover the topics of Sustainability and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA), Health Impact Assessment (HIA) and Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). In addition, it is noted that while most people live in urban areas, across the borough there are over 60 rural settlements, where residents often face very limited transport options and dispersed services, with little choice but to rely on car, van or motorcycle for their everyday needs. As such, consideration has also been given to rural connectivity through a Rural Proofing Assessment.

Taken together these various assessments are described as an 'Integrated Sustainability Appraisal' (ISA). It is also important to note that as there is a potential that the TWTP could lead to a direct or indirect effect on sites which have been designated at the European level for nature conservation purposes (such as Special Areas of Conservation), a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) was also carried out and is reported separately. Furthermore, as required by the Department for Transport's Quantified Carbon Guidance (QCG), a separate Carbon Assessment has been carried out.

How the TWTP was assessed – the ISA Framework

Following a comprehensive review of baseline information relating to Telford and Wrekin, as well as relevant legislation, plans and policies, it was possible to identify a series of key sustainability issues, as well as opportunities for the Telford and Wrekin area. This allowed the definition of a series of objectives, against which the sustainability performance of the Revised TWTP has been assessed and these were set out in an ISA Framework. These ISA Objectives are:

1. Protect and improve air quality
2. Reduce the impact on environmental noise from transportation sources
3. Reduce carbon emissions from Transport and contribute to meeting Telford & Wrekin's goal of carbon neutral by 2030
4. Maximise adaptation and resilience of the transport network to the effects of a changing climate, including through reducing the risk of flooding

5. Enhance biodiversity, promote ecosystem resilience and functionality and contribute to the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain and the delivery of the Nature Recovery Network
6. Protect and enhance sites designated for their international importance for nature conservation purposes (linked to HRA)
7. Protect, enhance and promote geodiversity
8. Protect and enhance cultural heritage assets and their settings, and the wider historic environment
9. Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of Telford and Wrekin's protected landscapes and townscapes, protect wider landscapes, seascapes and townscapes and enhance visual amenity
10. Protect and enhance the water environment
11. Protect soil resources and avoid land contamination
12. Promote sustainable use of resources and natural assets
13. Promote economic growth and job creation, and improve access and connectivity to jobs and skills for all
14. Support the wider coordination of land use and energy planning across Telford and Wrekin
15. Improve health and well-being for all citizens and reduce inequalities in health (HIA specific objective)
16. Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society (EqIA specific objective)
17. Promote fairness and equity in rural connectivity (Rural proofing specific objective)

Consideration was also made of the series of health, qualities and rural sub-objectives:

Health sub-objectives (relate to ISA Objective 15)

- Improve accessibility to health and leisure services and facilities and amenities for all
- Indirect impacts - Improve affordability of public transport
- Improve safety of the transport network (including roads) and reduce the number of accidents and other incidents
- Reduce severance
- Improve connections between and within communities
- Protect health by reducing air, noise, odour and light pollution from transport
- Improve access to active travel modes
- Improve access to public transport

Equalities sub-objectives (relate to ISA Objective 16)

- Improve accessibility to services, facilities and amenities for all, in particular by 'walk, wheel or cycle' (active travel) modes
- Improve affordability of transport
- Improve safety of the transport network (including roads) and reduce the number of accidents and other incidents
- Improve provision of public transport in rural areas or to those areas experiencing constraint in public transport provision
- Reduce severance
- Reduce air, noise, odour and light pollution from transport

Rural connectivity sub-objective (relate to ISA Objective 17)

- Increase access via a range of transport modes for rural communities.
- Enable economic growth, and employment diversification in rural areas.
- Connecting people with nature

A series of questions to help aid the assessment and the interpretation of each Objective were also identified. These questions and the ISA Objectives together make up the ISA Framework against which the TWTP was assessed.

Assessment of strategic alternatives

The SEA Regulations require that when an environmental report on a proposed plan such as TWTP is prepared, it must identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing reasonable alternatives to the plan which it assesses, as well as the likely significant effects of the plan itself. In relation to TWTP, two alternative scenarios were identified. These were:

- Alternative 1: To continue under the present approach to planning and investment
- Alternative 2: To implement the proposed TWTP

Consideration of those alternatives, against the ISA Framework, showed that while there is still a potential for both beneficial and adverse effects to occur, implementation of a new approach to transport planning (in the form of the TWTP) is consistently preferable to maintaining the current approach, as set out in the existing Telford and Wrekin Transport Plan. A key element is that since the previous approach was developed in 2011, there has been a progressive and constant evolution of policy and legislative approaches to a range of environmental and social issues, that are not reflected (or are only partially reflected) in the previous approach to transport planning. For example, there is now a requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain and consideration of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The issue of a changing climate, and the urgent need to adapt and make the transport network more resilient to the challenges this will inevitably bring, is also much more pertinent than previously.

Other key areas of enhanced sustainability performance (compared to the current approach to transport planning) include areas such as a clearer and stronger focus on more active travel modes, a greater focus on the use of public transport, enhanced digital connectivity, a greater focus on avoiding the use of natural resources (or re-using where possible), as well as much more proactively considering health and equalities – the TWTP makes clear that as schemes progress, Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment will be conducted as needed to evaluate potential impacts on individuals or groups, thereby guiding the design and delivery process.

Ensuring the TWTP is aligned with sustainable goals

It is important that the aim to ensure as sustainable a plan as possible was considered at as early a stage as possible, in order to maximise the ‘sustainability performance’ of the TWTP. Therefore, in order to ensure that this vision, guiding principles and associated goals of the developing TWTP were broadly aligned with the ISA objectives, an early high level consideration of ‘compatibility’ was undertaken and discussions held with the plan making team.

While broad compatibility between the aims and guiding principles of the TWTP and the ISA objectives was found, a number of areas of potential conflict were identified. This was mainly relating to the development of transport infrastructure, with consequent effects on

both the environment and people of the plan area. In short, it can be anticipated that engineering works / construction activities would result in adverse effects on both people and the environment. Similarly, the operation of such transport infrastructure can also be anticipated to have adverse effects.

Identification of such potential effects resulted in a number of recommendations being made as to how the sustainability performance of the TWTP could be strengthened. Of particular note, the fourth guiding principle was added – ‘Fit for the Future’, with goals relating to the reliability and maintenance of networks, adaptable and resilient networks, and sustainably and inclusively designed networks. This last goal is of key importance as it will ensure that environmental impact is considered throughout all stages of design, along with a reduction in carbon emissions. From a social perspective, this guiding principle and goal will act to support health and wellbeing of people of, and visitors to, the plan area.

The addition of this guiding principle also resulted in detailed policy being developed that covers a range of sustainability issues:

- Maintain and manage our transport assets
- Keep our transport network running smoothly
- Build in resilience to climate change and extreme weather
- Embrace new transport data and technologies
- Seek opportunities to bring enhancement through transport schemes
- Protect areas that are recognised for their importance to conservation and biodiversity
- Protect Telford & Wrekin’s landscape, townscape and historic environments
- Protect air and water environments from transport pollution
- Reduce whole life carbon
- Protect natural resources and promote circular economy principles
- Proactively consider health and equalities impacts

With the addition of this fourth ‘Fit for the future’ guiding principle, along with its associated goals and detailed policy, it was considered that the overarching approach of the TWTP via its vision and guiding principles provided a generally firm underpinning to help ensure that the sustainability performance of the TWTP could be maximised.

Assessment of the Transport Vision & Strategy

Contained within the TWTP are a series of policies that set out how the Guiding Principles and Goals of the TWTP will be implemented. As the policies are mutually supportive of each other within the context of the Goal, for the purposes of assessment, these policies have been considered and assessed together as a group within the overall Goal. This will allow consideration of how the Goal as a whole will act to promote sustainability, but it should be noted that grouping of policies may mask subtle differences in outcome.

Guiding Principle: Transforming travel choices

This Guiding Principle is about providing a genuine range of attractive and reliable travel options and is made up of the following Goals and their policies:

- Walking, wheeling and cycling are safer, more accessible and attractive travel options.
- Public transport is attractive, reliable and more affordable.
- People are supported to make informed and sustainable travel choices.

The assessment of the policies within each of the Goals within this Guiding Principle made the following key findings:

- There is a strong emphasis on encouraging a modal shift towards sustainable modes of transport
- There is potential for health benefits through the reduction of emissions, especially vulnerable groups like the elderly and children
- The overall reduction of private car use is anticipated to have slight benefits on the environment through the reduction of private vehicles on the road and an increased uptake in sustainable methods of transport
- There is potential to reduce travel inequalities and create opportunities for access to jobs and skills as a result of these policy areas.
- This policy area is likely to help preserve the built environment, streetscape and historic environment of the plan area.
- Rural connectivity is likely to be improved
- Overall safety of the transport network is anticipated to be enhanced, particularly for those who are walking, wheeling and cycling.

Guiding Principle: Improving accessibility

This Guiding Principle is about designing a safe, accessible, people centred transport system and is made up of the following Goals and their policies:

- Thriving and healthy local communities.
- Everyone feels safe to travel.
- An inclusive and accessible transport network.

The assessment of the policies within each of the Goals within this Guiding Principle made the following key findings:

- There is a strong emphasis on increasing accessibility for all groups, including those who may typically face difficulties in accessing transport.
- There is a potential for health and wellbeing benefits through reduced emissions and greater opportunities for active travel.

- Reducing or removing the need to travel by car will help reduce emissions and these can be anticipated to have some environmental benefits, albeit generally slight.
- Similarly, improved placemaking and regeneration offer some environmental benefits, but will be of more significance in terms of economic effects.
- Inequalities and issues such as social isolation should be improved by this policy area.
- Collaboration with a range of groups to understand their needs is a key component.
- There will be increased opportunities for training and employment.
- As well as physical connectivity, digital connectivity will improve accessibility and help improve resilience, though it may not be suitable for all groups and would have cost implications.
- Physical and psychological barriers to travel will be removed or reduced. Overall safety will improve and there should be a better sense of safety on the transport network, benefitting those in society who may feel uneasy when travelling and empowering them to travel with confidence.

Guiding Principle: Unlocking potential

This Guiding Principle is about maintaining prosperity while maximising the potential of the borough and is made up of the following Goals and their policies:

- Strong cross-border connections
- Sustainable, mixed-use developments
- A greater share of greener journeys

The assessment of the policies within each of the Goals within this Guiding Principle made the following key findings:

- Cross border connections will improve connectivity across a wider area, benefitting all groups, though it will likely have adverse effects in terms of air quality and carbon emissions.
- Cross border connections will improve the economy – it will help ensure goods can move seamlessly across borders to connect businesses with regional and national markets.
- There is a key focus on active travel – this will bring health benefits, but may not be suitable for all groups, with the elderly, the very young, those with certain disabilities and similar perhaps not benefitting to the same degree.
- There is a focus on public transport – this will also benefit all groups, but again there are groups within society who are less able to benefit. The TWTP recognises this and sets out a range of measures to provide support.
- Support will be provided to the uptake of EVs. This will benefit the environment across a range of issues such as air, carbon, water, with additional consequent benefits in terms of health. It is noted though that EVs can still have issues – they still will result in effects on water through tyre and brake degradation and will still have a significant noise signature.
- There will be clear support for the new Local Plan – this will help result in well designed street layouts with good quality active and public transport connections and access to nature and public spaces.
- A general reduction in congestion can improve safety, as well as having benefits to a range of environmental issues including townscapes and potentially the historic environment.

Guiding Principle: Fit for the Future

This Guiding Principle is about keeping Telford and Wrekin moving, now and for the future, and is made up of the following Goals and their policies:

- Reliable and well-maintained networks
- Adaptable and resilient networks
- Sustainably and inclusively designed networks

The assessment of the policies within each of the Goals within this Guiding Principle made the following key findings:

- There is a clear commitment to ongoing assessment as schemes come forward for planning and detailed design. This will include Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment.
- A focus on active travel and an uptake of EVs should bring significant benefits for the environment and people of the plan area
- Proactive maintenance will allow assets to be used for longer, thereby reducing emissions, protecting natural and built resources and reducing waste.
- A focus on Natural Flood Management and SuDS will help protect against flooding but also provide opportunities for biodiversity and other environmental enhancements.
- Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement will also be provided through linking transport schemes with wider initiatives, such as Biodiversity Action Plans and Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Improvements in landscape and townscape are possible, along with better protection of the historic environment.
- Improved and more resilient networks will allow for better connections between and within communities and more reliable access to the facilities and services that they require, with beneficial effects in terms of health and equalities. This will also have economic benefits.

Recommendations made by the ISA to strengthen policy within TWTP

As noted, a major recommendation was made early in the ISA process to strengthen the TWTP in sustainability terms through the addition of a fourth guiding principle – ‘Fit for the Future’, with goals relating to the reliability and maintenance of networks, adaptable and resilience networks, and sustainably and inclusively designed networks.

During the Policy assessment process, a number of further recommendations were made in respect of individual policies. These recommendations and how they were addressed is as follows:

Table 1 - ISA Recommendations and how these were addressed

ISA Recommendation	How was this addressed?
The TWTP should make clear that there is an ongoing requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment as schemes come forward for more detailed planning.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF6 which notes “we will continue to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment where required to ensure that transport schemes avoid adverse effects on internationally important sites”.

ISA Recommendation	How was this addressed?
The TWTP should make clear that there is an ongoing requirement to consider the potential effects of schemes on people to ensure that health impacts are understood and that more equitable access to services and facilities can be achieved.	This recommendation is addressed through Policy FF11 which notes that "as TWTP policies and schemes progress, we will proactively consider health and equalities issues from the earliest stages. HIA and/or EqlA assessments will be conducted as needed to evaluate potential impacts on individuals or groups, guiding the design and delivery process".
The TWTP should make clear that the use of Low Zero Emission Vehicles (LZEV) will be promoted / encouraged.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF8 which notes "we will promote more sustainable travel choices, such as walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport and low emission vehicles, to reduce ongoing emissions from transport".
While note is made in the TWTP of the need for planting (in relation to helping with climate adaptation), it should be made clearer that planting should be with native species of local provenance.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF3, which notes "...including through appropriate materials, planting for shade and shelter (using native species of local provenance), and the use of low-carbon solutions".
In relation to the use of resources, it needs to be made clearer that innovative technologies and approaches will be used in design, construction and operation of transport schemes.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF10, which notes "We will explore the use of innovative technologies and approaches in design, construction and operation of transport schemes to improve effectiveness and efficiency, helping ensure long-term value while minimising environmental impact".
Clearer reference should be made to the need to reduce noise emissions where possible	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF8 which notes "we will ensure that transport schemes are designed and operated in a way that protects air quality, water environments and local quality of life from transport-related pollution, including noise and vibration..."
Reference should be made to PM2.5 and the potential impact of EVs.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF8 which notes "While electric vehicles can help reduce noise, carbon emissions and some air pollutants, they do not eliminate all emissions, including particulate matter (PM2.5) from tyre and brake wear. We will therefore continue to support measures that reduce these emissions, including encouraging sustainable travel, maintaining our roads and managing traffic to reduce stop-start driving".
Clearer reference should be made in Policy FF7 to the need for landscape design.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF7 which notes "We will ensure that transport schemes are planned, designed and delivered in a way that protects and enhances Telford & Wrekin's landscape, townscape and historic environments.

ISA Recommendation	How was this addressed?
	This includes avoiding impacts on sensitive areas wherever possible and ensuring that designs respect local character and setting, in both urban and rural environments. We will consider landscape design and planting from the outset, helping transport improvements become a positive part of the places they serve.”
Consideration should be given to the need to take opportunities to improve townscape by removing street clutter or improving signage. Consideration should also be given to making sure that signage and lighting is reflective of historic town centres and such areas.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF7 which notes “we will also protect the historic environment by designing schemes that respond positively to heritage assets and their settings, ensuring that features like seating, signage and lighting reflect local character”
Clear reference should be made to the need to take opportunities where possible to prevent the spread of invasive species and the need to take opportunities to remediate areas of contamination.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy FF5 which notes “This could include habitat enhancement, management of invasive non-native species, and the remediation of previously contaminated or degraded land”.
Note should be made of the need to consider the provision of toilet facilities at travel hubs, as this will benefit all groups in society but may be particularly welcome by those with young children, the elderly and those with certain conditions (such as pregnancy), those taking certain medications as well as those with certain disabilities.	This recommendation was addressed via Policy IA11 which notes “It is essential that these hubs are accessible for people with different needs and facilities like public toilets are provided where possible”.

Assessment of the Transport Delivery Plan

The TWTP sets out a series of schemes within a Transport Delivery Plan that show how it is intended to turn the vision of the TWTP into action.

The Transport Delivery Plan sets out a clear, phased programme of schemes and interventions, aligned with national LTP guidance and funding arrangements, and it is the intention that it will be updated regularly to reflect progress, funding opportunities and evolving priorities.

It is to be noted that some elements of the Transport Delivery Plan will apply across the plan area (for example improvements to traffic lights), whereas others are located in specific places. Both types of scheme were assessed. Those where the location was known and which were assessed individually are as follows:

- Telford Central - Ramp Access
- Railway Station Upgrades
- Hollinswood Interchange Improvements
- Apley Roundabout
- Haybridge Roundabout
- A518 Corridor Improvement Scheme
- A442 Northern Arc Capacity Improvement Scheme - Trench Lock Interchange
- A442 Northern Arc Capacity Improvement Scheme - Hadley Park Roundabout and Yew Tree Junction
- A5 Watling Street Corridor Improvements
- LCWIP schemes
- Ironbridge Park & Ride

The following schemes were assessed non-locationally:

- Employment Centre Connectivity Package
- T&W LEVI Project
- Traffic Signals Improvement Scheme
- Safety Schemes
- Electric Bus
- Maintenance Works (groups the schemes: A442 Queensway Upgrades; Footpath Maintenance; Street Lighting Maintenance; Drainage Maintenance; Street Furniture; Road Markings; Structure Maintenance and Carriageway Maintenance)
- Bus Improvements (groups the schemes: Tender costs of services 99 to 104; Demand Response Transport scheme; Bus Shelter Improvement Scheme and Bus service infrastructure civils works).

The interventions were assessed against the ISA Objectives set out in the ISA Framework. The key findings are summarised below.

Construction Effects

The assessment found that many transport interventions may result in temporary adverse effects during construction. These effects are primarily associated with construction activities, including increased noise, dust, air pollution, carbon emissions, traffic disruption

and the use of materials and resources. Many larger schemes, including Employment Centre Connectivity Package, Maintenance Works, Bus Improvements, as well as the railway station, roundabout, corridor and interchange improvement schemes, have the potential to result in significant adverse effects due to their scale and the potential for impacts on the natural and built environment and nearby communities.

There is the potential for temporary impacts on biodiversity, habitats, landscape character, heritage assets, water resources and soils. Construction activities may also affect local accessibility and travel patterns while works are underway. However, these effects are generally expected to be short-term and can be reduced through the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures and construction management practices.

Construction of new infrastructure is also expected to provide some temporary economic benefits through job creation and support for the local construction sector. These beneficial effects are expected to be significant for the Employment Centre Connectivity Package and Bus Improvements interventions.

Operational Effects

Once operational, the interventions are expected to deliver mostly beneficial effects across Telford and Wrekin. The assessment identified significant benefits related to improved accessibility, connectivity, economic growth, health and wellbeing, equality of opportunity and rural connectivity.

Interventions supporting public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling, including bus improvements, railway station upgrades and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) schemes, are expected to encourage more sustainable travel choices and improve access to jobs, education, healthcare and other services. These measures are likely to benefit a wide range of users, including older people, disabled people, young people and those without access to a private vehicle.

A number of interventions, including electric buses, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and active travel improvements, are expected to contribute to improved air quality, reduced noise pollution and reduced carbon emissions. Highway and corridor improvement schemes are also expected to improve journey reliability and network efficiency, supporting economic growth and improving access to employment opportunities and services.

The assessment also identified some potential slight adverse operational effects associated with certain highway capacity improvement schemes. While reliability and accessibility benefits may be achieved, there is a risk of induced demand, higher traffic volumes, carbon impacts, noise, severance and pressure on local environments.

In relation to carbon, please see the note below regarding an assessment made of the potential impact of the TWTP on carbon.

Mitigation

As part of the ISA assessment process, a series of mitigation measures/approaches have been recommended for each ISA Objective as set out below.

Table 2 - Overview of Mitigation

ISA Objective	Overview of Mitigation
1. Protect and improve air quality	It will be important to reduce emissions and protect air quality as much as possible. Mitigation measures may affect the project design, layout, construction, operation and/or may comprise measures to improve air quality in pollution hotspots beyond the immediate locality of the scheme. Measures could include, but are not limited to, changes to the route of the new scheme, changes to the proximity of vehicles to local receptors in the existing route, physical means including barriers to trap or better disperse emissions and speed control. The implementation of mitigation measures may require working with partners to support their delivery.
2. Reduce the impact on environmental noise from transportation sources	Due to the potential threats from sources of environmental noise such as road traffic and railways, measures should be taken to ensure the effects of environmental noise on receptors such as residential areas, schools and workplaces. Areas where environmental noise quality is good should be preserved, and the impacts of noise from transport should be reduced on identified Noise Action Important Areas. During construction, use should be made of electric plant / vehicles, speed limits should be in place and consideration of noise made in Construction Environmental Management Plans.
3. Reduce carbon emissions from Transport and contribute to meeting Telford & Wrekin's goal of carbon neutral by 2030	Due to the potential threats posed by a changing climate and in order to meet Government commitments to reducing carbon emissions, measures should be taken to reduce the amount of carbon from our transport system. Reductions would mainly be from vehicles and can be found in many of the measures suggested to reduce air pollution emissions, but further reductions to the carbon footprint can be found in the construction and operation of transport network assets – for example by using more energy efficient lights. The carbon footprint can be readily measured at construction and operation by use of an appropriate carbon calculator.
4. Maximise adaptation and resilience of the transport network to the effects of a changing climate, including through reducing the risk of flooding	Flooding poses a particular risk to the transport network, and this situation is likely to get worse with a changing climate. However, new infrastructure developments or improvements to existing infrastructure can also contribute to an additional flood risk elsewhere. Opportunities can be taken to lower flood risk by considering flood protection measures, improving flow routes, flood storage capacity and using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The appropriate use of SuDS will be critical, and it should be the intention that site layout and surface water drainage systems should cope with events that exceed the design capacity of the system, so that excess water can be safely stored on or conveyed

ISA Objective	Overview of Mitigation
	from the site without adverse impacts. Infrastructure should only be located in flood zones when there is no other option.
5. Enhance biodiversity, promote ecosystem resilience and functionality and contribute to the achievement of Biodiversity Net Gain and the delivery of the Nature Recovery Network	Opportunities to enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure exist, through designing in biodiversity into schemes. These opportunities include for example, the development of wildflower meadows along linear features such as roads and railway lines, which will look attractive and also provide opportunities for pollinators, or could include simple measures such as bird / bat boxes. More complex measures such as animal over or under passes can be considered. Similarly, biodiversity can be enhanced by the planting of suitable / native species of trees and hedgerows. Properly planned maintenance schemes can also enhance biodiversity, for example from the active control of invasive species. Particular consideration needs to be made to protection measures in relation to any scheme which may impact directly, or indirectly, on any site designated for nature conservation purposes
6. Protect and enhance sites designated for their international importance for nature conservation purposes (linked to HRA)	Particular consideration needs to be made to protection measures in relation to any scheme which may impact directly, or indirectly, on any site designated for nature conservation purposes, particularly those designated as SSSI or Natura 2000.
7. Protect, enhance and promote geodiversity	New transport interventions have the potential to impact on sites of geological value through direct land take for infrastructure, construction and operational disturbance and emissions / contamination. Therefore, it's essential that appropriate protection methods (including avoidance) are taken into consideration for geological sites and where possible, interventions should look to enhance geodiversity.
8. Protect and enhance cultural heritage assets and their settings, and the wider historic environment	The historic environment includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora. Heritage assets may be buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes. Consideration should be made of the character and setting of the heritage asset, its significance (and level of protection afforded to it), the potential for loss or harm and need for conservation. Opportunities should be taken when possible for the enhancement of heritage assets. It should also be noted that due to its nature, not all heritage features may be apparent at the planning / design stage and precautions for unexpected discovery should be taken – perhaps through an archaeological watching brief.

ISA Objective	Overview of Mitigation
	Any scheme that has potential for works in and around the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site needs to be carefully planned and considered.
9. Conserve and enhance the natural beauty of Telford and Wrekin's protected landscapes and townscapes, protect wider landscapes, seascapes and townscapes and enhance visual amenity	Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Reducing the scale of a project or making changes to its operation can help to avoid or mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project. Consideration during planning should also be given to appropriate siting, design of the scheme (including choice of materials) and landscaping schemes. Note that ideally native species of local provenance should be used in any planting. Subject to appropriate planning, screening can also take place 'off site' e.g. by planting out gaps in tree lines / hedgerows. Particular consideration is to be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in any nationally designated areas, with encouragement given to avoiding these areas if possible. Opportunities for landscape enhancement should be taken when possible.
10. Protect and enhance the water environment	Impact on local water resources can be addressed through planning and design for the efficient use of water, including water recycling. Consideration should be given to the use of SuDS (including permeable paving), but it is also recognised that conventional drainage will play an important role. Protection and good pollution control measures are to be utilised during both construction and operation of transport schemes.
11. Protect soil resources and avoid land contamination	Protection of soil resources, particularly those of higher quality / areas of better agricultural lands should always be considered – this could be done during scheme planning by careful route selection. If areas of good quality soil cannot be avoided, care should be taken during construction to store topsoil for later reuse – either on site as landscaping or further afield. Opportunities should also be taken to utilise areas of previously developed land and to remediate contaminated land when possible. This could include the removal / appropriate treatment of any invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed.
12. Promote sustainable use of resources and natural assets	Consideration during design and construction of transport schemes should be given to the waste hierarchy of prevention, reuse, recycling and disposal. All waste should be handled in accordance to applicable waste management legislation and the emphasis should be to minimise the volume of waste produced and the volume sent for disposal, unless it can be demonstrated that this is the best environmental outcome. Consideration should be given to the use of Recycled materials in construction.
13. Promote economic growth and job creation, and	It is vital that the transport network provides and where possible improves, the access to employment opportunities and effectively connects business areas with residential areas. Connectivity

ISA Objective	Overview of Mitigation
improve access and connectivity to jobs and skills for all	between business and residential centres and key infrastructure is a major consideration to be made, as is connectivity between urban centres across the region. Issues such as the attractiveness of the region as a better place to live and work can also influence and enhance inward investment or tourism and thereby increase employment opportunities across the region.
14. Support the wider coordination of land use and energy planning across Telford and Wrekin	All of the proposed schemes will require adherence to the relevant planning requirements for any development in the region. As such consideration of these requirements will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
15. Improve health and well-being for all citizens and reduce inequalities in health (HIA specific objective)	The consideration of health, well-being and community safety is critical as part of scheme planning and design and should include the introduction of the most modern and effective safety measures where proportionate. Safety considerations should apply to the construction phase, as well as when the transport infrastructure is operational. It should always be the consideration to minimise the risk of deaths or injury arising from the scheme and contribute to an overall improvement in societal safety levels. Consideration during scheme planning and design also has to be given to reducing emissions and other aspects such as noise, vibration dust, light pollution and severance which potentially effect health and well-being. Access to public services (health, education, community facilities etc.) is also another key consideration. Where appropriate, there should be an education programme to explain new technologies, digital services and automated vehicles etc. to ensure people feel secure and confident in their use. Liaison with relevant community services, hospitals, education centres etc. should also be undertaken as appropriate. People should also be able to feel secure and safe and design should always consider the need to reduce / prevent crime.
16. Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society (EqIA specific objective)	During the Planning and Design stages of any transport scheme, it is vital that consideration is given to the need for access to key public services such as health, education community and leisure facilities by all members of society. Access should be considered in relation to all modes, with an emphasis on more active and sustainable types. Affordability should also be a key consideration, with a particular emphasis placed on effects on lower income groups. It should also be a priority to enhance access to key services for vulnerable groups.
17. Promote fairness and equity in rural connectivity (Rural proofing specific objective)	It is considered essential that rural connectivity is enhanced - transport related social exclusion (TRSE) is a significant issue. Increased accessibility and connectivity will improve the reach of the transport network to ensure that different groups, including those in rural areas, do not feel 'left behind', especially vulnerable

ISA Objective	Overview of Mitigation
	groups such as individuals with disabilities and elderly people. As such, opportunities to improve connectivity with rural communities should be integrated into design.

Cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects

There is also a requirement to consider Cumulative, Synergistic and Indirect Effects of the TWTP as a result of the joint implementation of all policy proposals. Secondary and indirect effects are effects that are not a direct result of the plan but occur away from the original effect or as the result of a complex pathway. Cumulative effects arise where several proposals individually may or may not have significant effects, but in-combination have a significant effect due to spatial crowding or temporal overlap. Synergistic effects are when two or more effects act together to create effects greater than the simple sum of the effects acting alone.

Table 3 – Anticipated cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects for TWTP

Effects	Causes	Significance
Air pollution emissions	It is considered that the TWTP will have an overall cumulative beneficial effect on air quality. This beneficial effect will be derived from a clear focus on policies that include elements such as digital connectivity, as well as the development and increased use of sustainable / active travel modes of transport which will lead to a reduction in air pollutant emissions. Further benefits will be experienced through more efficient network management and the promotion of zero emission vehicles.	Anticipated medium to long term moderate beneficial effects – benefits may be reduced if an outcome is continued reliance on the road network and a low uptake / provision for net zero vehicles as opposed to more sustainable modes of transport.
Carbon emissions	It is considered that the TWTP will have the potential to have an overall cumulative beneficial effect on reducing carbon emissions, although this will depend on the balance on the balance, scale, intensity and timescales of policies and measures implemented. Some beneficial effect will be derived from a clear focus on policies that include elements such as planning and Digital Connectivity, as well as the development and increased use of sustainable / active travel modes of transport which will lead to a reduction in air pollutant emissions. Further benefits will be experienced through more efficient network management and the promotion of zero emission vehicles.	Anticipated beneficial effects would be in the longer term, depending on measures enacted in later Transport Delivery Plans – benefits may be reduced if an outcome is continued reliance on the road network and a low uptake / provision for net zero vehicles as opposed to more sustainable modes of transport.

Effects	Causes	Significance
Biodiversity	The TWTP and associated potential interventions / measures will result in a mix of cumulative positive and negative effects on biodiversity. For example, some aspects will result in public realm improvements, which will offer the opportunity to increase biodiversity. The anticipated improvements in air quality driven by these Policy areas would also provide further benefits to biodiversity, including indirectly within sites designated for nature conservation, through reducing pollution deposition. However, other aspects such as highway developments or improvements may result in adverse effects – though even these will offer some opportunities for enhancement and ultimately achieve biodiversity net gain.	While effects in the short terms are likely to be slight adverse, ultimately, if net biodiversity gain is achieved, long term benefits will be slight beneficial.
Landscapes and townscapes and Cultural heritage	It is anticipated that TWTP will result in a mix of adverse and beneficial effects on landscapes and townscapes and cultural heritage across the Telford & Wrekin Council Area. Beneficial effects could be derived from policies that lead to public realm improvements and a reduction in congestion, for example in town and village centres, while adverse effects could be through the development of new infrastructure. Any scheme that has potential for works in and around the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site needs to be carefully planned and considered.	Anticipated slight beneficial and adverse effects over the medium to long term as schemes / measures are implemented.
Flooding	While a range of aspects of the TWTP will be neutral (for example increasing digital connectivity), other aspects such as development of infrastructure may lead to cumulative adverse effects. For example, aspects of development are likely to result in an increase in impermeable area and contribute to increased flood risk by increasing runoff. It is considered that overall the cumulative effect will be slight adverse (measures to incorporate SuDS and upstream NFM will reduce effects).	Overall slight adverse effect over the medium to long term as schemes / measures are implemented.
Soil, agricultural resources and	There will be a range of cumulative beneficial and adverse effects on soil,	Anticipated slight beneficial and adverse effects over the

Effects	Causes	Significance
contaminated land	agricultural resources and contaminated land from implementation of TWTP. For example, there may be opportunity for positive effects relating to contaminated land through removing sources of pollution), but it may also provide an opportunity for further land to become contaminated and could potentially lead to the loss of soil / agricultural resources. Effects will be experienced across the Telford & Wrekin Council Area.	medium to long term as schemes / measures are implemented.
Economic growth	It is anticipated that the TWTP will act as a key driver to economic growth across the Telford & Wrekin Council Area. It is anticipated policy set out in the TWTP will result in increased opportunities for people to access jobs and the services they need. This will include increased opportunities for commercial / business interactions. These Policy areas will also result in reduced congestion and will therefore help to make business more efficient and will also provide businesses with new (and potentially cheaper) ways to connect with consumers e.g. through e-cargo bikes and small scale delivery hubs. Economic benefits are considered likely due to efficient network management and removal or alleviation of congestion hotspots etc. as this will make travel across the Telford & Wrekin Council Area and to surrounding areas more efficient, with more reliable timings. This will likely provide better and more efficient access to jobs (by allowing the same journey time to reach a greater distance). As such, efficient networks will make doing business across the Council Area and to adjacent areas easier and more attractive.	Anticipated major beneficial effects over the medium to long term as schemes are implemented.
Health and well-being and equalities	It is anticipated that the TWTP will act to promote health and well-being and equalities through providing greater access to services and employment opportunities, as well as greater opportunities for active travel. There is also a clear emphasis on low traffic neighbourhoods, reducing vehicle numbers and vehicle speeds. Improvements to air quality and a reduction in noise levels	Anticipated moderate beneficial effects over the medium to long term as schemes are implemented, though with some uncertainty of effect on elements of the population.

Effects	Causes	Significance
	will also benefit health. Some parts of the population though may not be able to take full advantage e.g. the elderly in terms of active travel and there also remains uncertainty around affordability of public transport and the cost of digital connectivity may be an issue for some groups.	

The ISA has also considered other plans and projects that might lead to cumulative effects when combined with the TWTP. The focus of this in-combination assessment has been on other identified plans and projects of relevance as follows:

- Telford & Wrekin Local Plan 2011 – 2031
- Telford & Wrekin Council Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (at consultation stage as of July 2026)
- Council Plan 2024/25 to 2026/27
- Vision 2032
- Becoming Carbon Neutral Action Plan
- Safer Telford and Wrekin Partnership Community Safety Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27
- Telford Growth Strategy 2025 Refresh
- Telford & Wrekin Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Telford & Wrekin Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan
- Highway Asset Management Policy and Strategy
- Telford & Wrekin Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 - 2027
- Draft Telford & Wrekin's Housing Strategy 2025 - 2030
- Bus Service Improvement Plan (2025)
- Building Safer, Stronger & Healthier Communities Through Better Air Quality
- Transport Growth Strategy [PB1.1][PM1.2]
- Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy 2016 - 2021

It was concluded that the sustainability in-combination effects with plans and projects above were generally moderately beneficial.

Monitoring

It is important that Telford & Wrekin Council understand the effect of the implementation of the TWTP and the ISA set out a potential series of monitoring indicators that will be considered. In line with the SEA Directive, ISA monitoring covered significant social, environmental and economic effects and involved measuring indicators that will enable the establishment of a causal link between the implementation of the STP and the likely significant effects (both positive and negative) being monitored. This will be of particular benefit to those involved with the next iteration of the TWTP and if required, will allow early remediation to be undertaken of any identified adverse effects.

Note on the potential impact of the TWTP on carbon

As set out in the Carbon Assessment, at this stage, the net impact of the TWTP on carbon emissions is uncertain as measures have not been developed in sufficient detail to enable a full assessment of impacts across the whole TWTP time period. A high-level assessment of the impacts of the first Transport Delivery Plan (2027 to 2030) has been made, as more information is available for the measures proposed. However, it is not yet known how user emissions savings will balance with user increases and infrastructure emissions over the period to 2041.

As noted in the ISA, the TWTP contains a wide range of policies that could reduce carbon emissions and the ISA is supportive of these – it is considered that these could have benefits across a range of issues. For example, measures to increase active travel (walking and wheeling) can be anticipated to have benefits for health and wellbeing, as well as helping to create safer streets, help improve a ‘sense of place’ and so on.

However, the TWTP also includes policies that could increase emissions and in some instances the effect of measures that could reduce emissions may be limited by external factors and it is important that the ISA recognises this.

Emissions increases will be caused by policies and measures that cause increased road travel, whilst supporting other goals, particularly under the unlocking potential guiding principle. The scale of impact will depend on the level of increase in traffic, the speed changes and the proportion of freight traffic. Further emissions may also be caused by policies and measures that reallocate road space and thereby increase congestion.

In contrast, several of the TWTP policies and supporting measures have the potential to reduce emissions, particularly those to support the transforming travel choices and improving accessibility guiding principles.

However, for some measures the TWTP’s influence will be limited. For instance, many Avoid measures to reduce travel depend heavily on action from other stakeholders, such as planning authorities improving local service provision. The emissions impacts of TWTP measures would be hard to differentiate and are likely to be modest.

Similarly, although an important component, TWTP measures to support EV uptake would play a relatively limited role in the overall range of action needed to accelerate uptake. Other influences, particularly national action on vehicle fleet, are more important.

TWTP mode shift measures would have a more direct impact on emissions. However, where implemented incrementally and in isolation—as has been typical nationally—the resulting emissions reductions are likely to be limited. This is because, whilst the measures will improve capability and opportunity to use sustainable modes, they will not necessarily provide motivation. As highlighted by the COM-B model, motivation is a critical component of achieving mode shift.

Achieving the motivation for significant mode shift would require concerted parallel action to change the relative perceived costs and convenience of sustainable modes and car use (such as parking management and/or changes to pay per use cars). Without these wider measures, car owners are likely to continue to consider car to be the cheapest, most convenient option for most trips. This means they will have limited motivation to change habits, shift mode and reduce car use and emissions.

Effectiveness will also depend on the extent to which measures reflect the varied characteristics of different area types and the implications for travel choices. Mode shift is

most likely in urban areas where higher population densities and concentrated travel patterns often make public transport and active travel options more viable, whilst congestion can make car travel less convenient. The dispersed nature of travel in rural areas typically makes public transport less attractive.

The net impact of the TWTP on user emissions will depend on the balance, scale, intensity and timescales of policies and measures implemented. The high level assessment of the first Transport Delivery Plan indicates that it will deliver only limited emissions savings through mode shift, which are likely to be offset by increased emissions from road capacity improvements. Overall, the annual estimated user emissions impact is between 0.5% reduction and 0.5% increase by 2030, depending on the net balance of impact the highway improvements on traffic conditions. The net emissions impact for future TWTP Transport Delivery Plan periods will depend on the nature and extent of measures implemented.

Next steps

This ISA Report is being published for formal consultation with the Draft TWTP. The results of the formal public consultation exercise may well result in changes to the Draft TWTP and these may have implications for the ISA results. In addition, the consultation exercise may result in direct changes to the contents of the ISA Report. These will be reported in the next stage of development of the TWTP and ISA following adoption of the Plan.

Summary and Conclusions

Telford & Wrekin Council have developed a new Local Transport Plan, the Telford & Wrekin Transport Plan (TWTP) that sets out their vision, guiding principles, goals and schemes for transport in their area for the years 2027 to 2041. The current plan for transport in the Telford and Wrekin area was produced in 2011 and, while many of the elements of this plan are still relevant, its approach to sustainability is now dated. There are also important ambitions in terms of growth for the Telford and Wrekin area and it is vital therefore that the transport network is able to support these ambitions in a meaningful way, while still protecting the people and the environment.

As such, it is the intention that the TWTP will act to support the new Local Plan and guide transport investment up to 2041. The Transport Vision & Strategy includes the long-term vision, guiding principles, goals and policies for maintaining and improving transport in the borough. In addition, the first Transport Delivery Plan sets out the transport schemes and strategies that Telford & Wrekin Council will deliver between 2027 and 2030, in order to progress towards the vision for transport in the plan area. Future Transport Delivery Plans are expected to cover five-year periods, aligned with national government's Local Transport Grant funding settlements.

The TWTP covers all forms of travel including public transport (bus and rail), car and motorcycle-based travel, and non-motorised users which includes walkers, wheelers (those on scooters etc.), cyclists and equestrians. Freight transport by road and rail is also considered. Encouragement to choosing the best form of travel will be made through better information and more appropriate fare options, while removing the need to travel in some circumstances is also an important aspect of the TWTP – for example, this will be achieved through a focus on digital connectivity.

In addition, there is also a focus in the TWTP on safety and making people feel safer, as well as regeneration and placemaking, i.e. places that are more welcoming and which make local communities stronger, with a greater sense of local pride. It is hoped that such places, whether a large town or small village, will be places that people want to visit and spend time in, which in turn will help support social inclusion and local businesses. This will require close liaison with local communities and other interested stakeholders and the TWTP sets out many ways in which this will be done.

In order to assess the sustainability performance of the TWTP, an ISA has been carried out during its development. This ISA process has been thorough and comprehensive, with iterations of the TWTP being subject to review by an experienced ISA team who are independent of the plan making team. Close liaison between the ISA team and the plan making team has taken place throughout this process. It is considered that this approach resulted in an enhanced and more robust incorporation of sustainability considerations to the TWTP, in terms of policy approach but also particularly in terms of clarity of actions to be taken as any intervention derived from the TWTP will be developed.

For example, early review of the TWTP vision and guiding principles resulted in a fourth guiding principle being added, 'Fit for the Future', with associated goals relating to the reliability and maintenance of networks, adaptable and resilient networks, and sustainably and inclusively designed networks. This last goal is of key importance as its inclusion will ensure that environmental impact is considered throughout all stages of design, along with a reduction in carbon emissions. From a social perspective, this guiding principle and goal will act to support health and wellbeing of people of, and visitors to, the plan area.

The addition of this guiding principle also resulted in detailed policy being developed that covers a range of sustainability issues:

- Maintain and manage our transport assets
- Keep our transport network running smoothly
- Build in resilience to climate change and extreme weather
- Embrace new transport data and technologies
- Seek opportunities to bring enhancement through transport schemes
- Protect areas that are recognised for their importance to conservation and biodiversity
- Protect Telford & Wrekin's landscape, townscape and historic environments
- Protect air and water environments from transport pollution
- Reduce whole life carbon
- Protect natural resources and promote circular economy principles
- Proactively consider health and equalities impacts

Following inclusion of the new guiding principle, goals and associated policies, and based on the findings of the ISA, a number of key conclusions can be made with regards to the TWTP and its 'sustainability performance'.

Alternatives

The ISA assesses whether implementing the TWTP is a preferable alternative in sustainability terms, compared to continuing with the present approach to transport planning and investment. It has been found that the present approach based on the 2011 LTP does not align with latest approaches across a range of sustainability topics. While there is still a potential for both beneficial and adverse effects to occur, it has been shown that implementation of a new approach to transport planning (in the form of the TWTP) is consistently preferable to maintaining the current approach.

A key element is that since the previous approach was developed, there has been a progressive and constant evolution of policy and legislative approaches to a range of environmental and social issues, that are not reflected (or are only partially reflected) in the previous approach to transport planning. For example, there is now a requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain and consideration of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The issue of a changing climate and the urgent need to adapt and make the transport network more resilient to the challenges this will inevitably bring is also much more of note than previously.

Other key areas of enhanced sustainability performance (compared to the current approach to transport planning) through the new TWTP include a clearer and stronger focus on active travel, a greater focus on the use of public and demand responsive transport, enhanced digital connectivity, a greater focus on the need to avoid the use of natural resources (or re-use where possible), as well as much more proactive consideration of health and equalities – the TWTP makes clear note of that as schemes progress, Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment will be conducted as needed to evaluate potential impacts on individuals or groups, thereby guiding the design and delivery process.

Policy assessment

The ISA then examined each of the 'Guiding Principles', the supporting Goals and associated policies. These were as follows:

Guiding Principle 1: Transforming travel Choices - Providing a genuine range of attractive and reliable travel options

- Walking, wheeling and cycling are safer, more accessible and attractive travel options
- Public transport is frequent, reliable and more affordable
- People are supported to make informed and sustainable travel choices

Guiding Principle 2: Improving Accessibility - Designing a safe, accessible, people centred transport system

- Thriving and healthy local communities
- Everyone feels safe to travel
- An inclusive and accessible transport network

Guiding Principle 3: Unlocking potential - Maintaining prosperity while maximising the potential of the borough

- Strong cross-border connections
- Sustainable, mixed-use developments
- A greater share of greener journeys

Guiding Principle 4: Fit for the Future - Keeping Telford and Wrekin moving, now and for the future

- Reliable and well-maintained networks
- Adaptable and resilient networks
- Sustainably and inclusively designed networks

Background

The TWTP is not starting from a 'blank sheet of paper' and is reflective of the existing transport network, spatial challenges, and needs of the borough. Previous plans and strategies (not just in transport planning, but in urban planning in general) mean that there is a legacy of past decisions that reflected the transport, economic, social and financial aspirations of previous generations. For example, Telford New Town was designed and built on the assumption that most people would travel by car, and this form of transport still dominates both space and travel habitats in the borough. The borough has a distinctive blend of urban and rural areas, and car usage is particularly high in areas outside the main population centres in Telford which are often less well served by public transport.

As such, this means that there are elements of the TWTP that can be considered as more 'traditional' (in transport planning terms), including upgrades to the road network – this would include junction improvements and potentially highway widening schemes, or capacity increases. In some cases these could result in heavy civil engineering works, though it is recognised that this will be in limited areas to address specific issues such as congestion hotspots or providing connections to new developments. Nevertheless, due to the nature of these works, there will likely be environmental implications. For example, road widening could involve a direct loss of habitat, have an adverse effect on the water environment through pollution incidents during construction or polluted runoff during operation, or result in new or expanded features in the landscape. This is reflected in the assessment of the Transport Delivery Plan. On the whole, effective planning is key to managing such issues and the TWTP sets out how this can be done and it should be noted that road capacity schemes will only be considered once all other options have been explored. Nevertheless, it remains that increasing road capacity can help mitigate congestion in the short term, supporting more reliable journeys and reduced carbon, air and noise impacts. However, without careful planning, increased road capacity can lead to

induced demand in the longer term. This would likely cause increased carbon, air quality, noise etc impacts.

Environmental

The TWTP performs strongly across a number of goals and policy areas in terms of air quality and potential for helping to reduce carbon emissions. This can be seen through the focus on 'greener journeys' that include an uptake of EV's, active modes such as walking, wheeling and cycling, the focus on public transport, sustainable mixed use developments and ensuring sustainable and inclusive design. However, some policy areas perform less well in terms of air and carbon emissions, including supporting longer, cross border connections, as well as support for road capacity enhancements.

An increased resilience to the effects of climate change is also anticipated, particularly through the Goal relating to adaptable and resilient networks, where effects are anticipated to be major beneficial. Adaptable and resilient networks are also anticipated to be significantly beneficial in terms of biodiversity, the water environment and economic growth.

Across a number of ISA Objectives, effects of the TWTP are anticipated to be, for the most part, slight. The TWTP includes policies relating to sites designated for nature conservation, soil resources, geodiversity and heritage. It is worth noting that there are no 'European Sites' designated within the Plan area, though there are other sites designated at other 'levels', such as SSSI. Reliable and well maintained networks will provide some opportunities for significant beneficial effects in terms of the use of natural resources.

Landscape and Visual

In terms of landscape, townscape and visual amenity, it is anticipated that the TWTP could result in significant beneficial effects across a number of policy areas. For example, it is considered that the thriving and healthy local communities goal, with its focus on placemaking will provide clear opportunities for improvement. Sustainable mixed use developments, with a focus on the requirements of the new Local Plan, will similarly provide opportunities for improvement to landscapes and townscapes. Protection and enhancement of landscape is also a key policy area in respect of the goal for sustainably and inclusively designed networks.

Economic

The TWTP is considered to perform particularly well across a large number of Goals in relation to the ISA Objective to promote economic growth and job creation, and improve access and connectivity to jobs and skills for all (Objective 13). For example, a focus on strong cross border connections can be anticipated to allow for easier access to additional markets for business, while reliable, well maintained resilient networks will ensure that people can access their jobs and opportunities for training. Thriving and healthy local communities will also benefit economically.

Maximising economic (and other) benefits will require close liaison with partner organisations (such as National Highways and Network Rail), as well as local communities (including through Town and Parish Councils) and the TWTP recognises that need – particularly in relation to the goal of sustainable and mixed use developments which has a policy to support the Local Plan.

Social

The TWTP also performs strongly across multiple Goals in respect of health, equalities and rural connectivity, with significant beneficial effects anticipated in a number of aspects.

In relation to the focus on active travel modes such as walking, wheeling and cycling, there are clear opportunities for people to build activity into their everyday activities. It can be anticipated that this will have beneficial effects for all, but it is also important to note that not all groups in society will benefit to the same extent. Those who are very young, the elderly, those with certain disabilities or health conditions (including pregnancy), may struggle (or may be incapable) to travel by active modes. The distances in rural areas may also mean that active travel routes would be more likely to be used for recreation, rather than the full connectivity they can bring in denser areas.

The TWTP has a strong focus on enhancing the public transport offering, which will likely benefit a wider range of the population. There are groups within society who may not feel comfortable utilising public transport, and the TWTP does recognise such barriers and note is made of supporting inclusive travel through initiatives such as discounted fares for young people, alongside maintaining free travel for older people and those with disabilities in line with national requirements.

Safety will be increased through a commitment to developing a safety strategy and further developing an overarching 'Safe System' approach, as well as initiatives such as a voluntary taxi CCTV scheme, helping to ensure passengers feel safe and confident when travelling. Note is also made that all staff such as drivers involved in transport delivery will be trained in passenger safety. Consideration is given to improving the perception of safety, as well as absolute risk, since this can deter people from using certain transport modes. This will be particularly important for the young, the elderly and those with certain disabilities.

Improved facilities such as step free access, upgraded footbridges, and connections to town centres will help to reduce severance for a greater range of people. Reducing the need to travel will also help to remove some barriers in respect of accessibility. Increased digital connectivity, which is considered in the TWTP, will allow some commercial opportunities to be taken, alongside potentially the option to have appointments online, or to work from home. This may help to reduce some of the connectivity issues in rural areas, though it would have cost implications and not all would feel comfortable utilising technology for such needs, for example the elderly, or perhaps those for whom English isn't their first language.

For those who cannot access public transport, or may struggle with active travel and digital connectivity, there are still options set out within the TWTP. For example, note is made that taxis and private hire vehicles play an important role in the transport network, providing flexible, door-to-door journeys and helping people complete trips, such as accessing rail stations or airports. They are particularly valuable for people without access to a car, including many disabled users. The Dial-a-Ride community transport scheme, which offers a door-to-door service for eligible residents who cannot access conventional public transport due to mobility problems, will also continue. All vehicles are easy to access, having the ability to carry passengers in wheelchairs.

Inclusive Design and Assessment

From a holistic sustainability perspective, the Goal to have sustainably and inclusively designed networks is of key importance. This expresses the desire to have transport networks that are planned and delivered in a way that supports the environment, strengthens communities and contributes to a thriving economy. The TWTP sets out a

number of important components that will help ensure that this can happen. For example, a key element set out in this policy area is that as schemes are brought forward for design and planning, proactive consideration will be made of health and equalities. This will include the undertaking of Health Impact Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment as needed to evaluate potential impacts on vulnerable individuals or groups (including those noted as having protected characteristics under equalities legislation), guiding the design and delivery process. Use will be made of the latest inclusive design standards, including DfT guidance to mitigate adverse effects and maximise benefits. It is anticipated all groups will significantly benefit from such an approach, in terms of access to the services and facilities they require.

Note is also made that there will be a continuing undertaking of Habitats Regulations Assessment where required to ensure that transport schemes avoid adverse effects on internationally important sites.

Cumulative Effects and Monitoring

It is recognised that the TWTP will not act or be delivered in isolation and will influence and be influenced by other Plans, Policies or developments across and beyond Telford and Wrekin. It is anticipated that the TWTP will act to benefit those other Plans and Policies, though there is a potential for some adverse effects. Nevertheless, it is considered that the TWTP sets out an approach to further assessment that will address any cumulative effects arising.

It is also important that Telford & Wrekin Council understand the effect of the implementation of the TWTP and the ISA has set out a potential series of monitoring indicators. These will also complement those KPIs and monitoring indicators which Telford & Wrekin Council have identified in the TWTP section 'Measuring Success'. It is the intention that monitoring will cover social, environmental and economic effects and it will involve measuring indicators that will enable the establishment of a causal link between the implementation of the TWTP and the likely effects (both positive and negative) being monitored. This will be of particular benefit to those involved with the next iteration of the Transport Delivery Plan and if required, will allow early remediation to be undertaken of any identified adverse effects.

In conclusion therefore, while the nature of a transport plan means that there will inevitably be some adverse effects on the environment and people, it is considered that the TWTP sets out a strong set of 'Guiding Principles' and Goals that will allow for a strong sustainability performance to be achieved via the implementation of this plan.

**Protect
Care and Invest
to create a
better borough**



**Telford & Wrekin
COUNCIL**