



Transport and Accessibility

Supplementary Planning Document

Scoping Report

June 2025

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Introduction

What is this document?

This scoping report is the first step in preparing a Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will provide detailed guidance on the interpretation and implementation of policies within the Halton's Local Plan period (2022-2037).

The purpose of this document is to engage key stakeholders in considering the scope and content of the SPD.

The responses on this scoping report will inform the preparation of a draft SPD, which will then in turn be published for consultation before it is then adopted. Once adopted the SPD will carry full weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

The Borough of Halton

Halton is a Unitary Authority located in the North West of England which straddles the upper estuary of the River Mersey. It is located to the east of Liverpool with the St Helens to the north, Warrington and Manchester to the east, and rural north Cheshire lying to the south. Home to 128,432 people, Halton lies within the Liverpool City Region with excellent transport linkages to the rest of the country. Halton is well located to accommodate the growth of both new and existing businesses. Whilst Halton still has an industrial footprint, there are a number of internationally recognised science, technology and research areas, and a significant number of logistical hubs located in the Borough, providing a wide range of employment opportunities for residents.

What is Transport and Accessibility?

Transport is an essential part of our everyday lives, and enables access to key services like employment, education, essential shopping facilities and healthcare. Transport also moves freight, which fuels industries, and keep businesses thriving. Advantages of using sustainable transport are many and varied. Reducing the number of private vehicles on the road lowers exhaust emissions, which in turn reduces our carbon footprint. Sustainable transport also enables healthy lifestyles, as encouraging people to use active modes of travel like walking or cycling has direct health benefits for the user, as well as the environment.

Accessibility focuses on travel time, cost of travel, number of travel options, comfort, and risk while addressing the needs and inequalities of the community. Accessibility is important as it gives people more options for how they make their journeys. Without sufficient accessibility provision, less affluent, older, and younger members of society can be left isolated and cut off from opportunities. Accessibility also includes good design to ensure accessibility by all users via various modes including location of parking. People with physical disabilities or mobility issues benefit from inclusive infrastructure design and better parking accessibility, as it enables them to visit places with less difficulty.

SPD Links with National Policy and Legislation

The Transport and Accessibility SPD will be produced so it is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Regard will also be had to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Links with Halton's Local Plan up to 2037 (2022)

The Transport and Accessibility SPD will be prepared to provide further guidance in relation to the interpretation and implementation of the policies in the Local Plan, in particular, Policy CS(R)15: Sustainable Transport, which states

Policy CS(R)15: Sustainable Transport

1. In order to encourage journeys to be made by sustainable modes of travel including walking, cycling and public transport, the Council will:
 - a. support a reduction in the need to travel by car.
 - b. encourage a choice of sustainable transport modes; and
 - c. ensure new developments are accessible by sustainable modes.
2. To support sustainable transport across the Borough:
 - a. Halton's existing Sustainable Transport Network will be protected.
 - b. Improvements to the existing Sustainable Transport Network will be supported
 - c. The introduction of new sustainable routes and facilities will be encouraged and;
 - d. Promote the use of green technology to reduce transport emissions
3. High trip generating developments will be expected to minimise the need to travel, particularly by private car and maximise the opportunities for the use of walking, cycling and public transport. The Council will expect them to be located where there is public transport accessibility and good walking and cycling links.
4. Development proposals must be consistent with and contribute to the implementation of the transport strategies and priorities.

Policy CS(R)15 of the Local Plan, as noted above, recognises the need to work in partnership with local communities and businesses to ensure existing developments are well linked, where the need to travel by private car in the Borough is reduced and journeys are made using sustainable transport modes. Simultaneously, it is important that any new development proposals are located where public transport is accessible and other sustainable transport links such as walking and cycling route are included in the proposals.

In addition to Policy CS(R)15, the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan contains other policies that are relevant to this SPD which, amongst others, include:

- CS(R)7 Infrastructure Provision
- CS(R)18 High Quality Design
- CS(R)21 Green Infrastructure
- C1 Transport Network and Accessibility
- C2 Parking Standards and Appendix D Parking Standards

Liverpool City Region Local Transport Plan 4

Halton is currently supporting the development of the Liverpool City Region Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP). This LTP subsumes the following transport plans and strategies and updates them with a single, integrated plan:

- The Halton Local Transport Plan, 2011
- The Merseyside Local Transport Plan, 2011
- LCR Long Term Rail Strategy, 2018
- LCR Local Journeys Strategy, 2018
- The Combined Authority Transport Plan, 2019

The LTP's purpose is to set out plans for transport services and investment to 2040. It is consistent with Government guidance and is informed and shaped by a range of wider Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) policies and strategies. This LTP will help to inform and shape decisions for the future of travel in the Liverpool City Region.

Other Relevant Policy Documents

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP)

- The LCRCA LCWIP sets out a strategic approach to developing a cohesive network of high standard active travel routes across the region, covering a period of 10 years (2019-2029).

Halton LCWIP

- Halton has recently developed its own LCWIP (2024) document which builds on the boroughs already excellent cycleway network. This is supported by an East Runcorn LCWIP.

Inclusive mobility

- The Department for Transport released a document on inclusive mobility in 2021. This document provides guidance on best practice for accessible infrastructure.

Scope of the Transport and Accessibility SPD

Proposed SPD Contents

The Transport and Accessibility SPD will aim to ensure Halton's residents and visitors are well-connected to all of the key services within the borough. It emphasises the importance of sustainable transport; while also ensuring it is accessible to all.

The Transport and Accessibility SPD will aim to:

- Make developers applying for planning permission more aware of the advice and practical support available in the Borough for contributions to Transport and Accessibility.
- Help applicants/developers understand that documents like Design and Access Statements are required for certain applications and so enable timely processing of applications.
- Inform developers of possible sources of funding and grants.
- Encourage the occupiers of new or expanded premises where new or improved transport links are being created to encourage sustainable transport modes where possible.
- Explain the difference between Travel Plans, Transport Statements and Transport Assessments to help developers/applicants identify what might be needed with their application.
- Encourage the use of sustainable travel wherever possible, while trying to lessen the impact of traffic generation.
- Help applicants/developer understand what is required of a Minimum Accessibility Standard Assessment
- Help applicants/developers understand what the Council expects in regard to car parking standards.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY SPD SCOPING REPORT (MAY 2025)

The broad context and coverage of the Transport and Accessibility SPD will be as follows:

- Introduction- Outline the Spatial Context of the borough and the current Climate Emergency. What to expect from a Transport and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)?
- How to use the Transport and Accessibility SPD- Information on Pre-application Advice
- Policies and Guidance. This includes the key policies and legislation which inform and support this SPD. These include:
 - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
 - The Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) (Adopted March 2022)
 - Other Supplementary Planning Documents
 - Halton Local Transport Plan
 - Liverpool City Region Combined Authority LTP4
 - Liverpool City Region (LCR) LCWIP
 - Halton Borough Council LCWIP
 - Infrastructure Plan
 - Inclusive mobility
 - Secure by Design, Building for Healthy Life
- Design and Access Statement- Explain what is a Design and Access Statement and What Should be Included in the Access Elements of a Design and Access Statement?
- Design Principles for Active Travel: What do the different levels of national, regional and local policy say about Walking and Cycling?
- Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements - What are Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements? How do they relate to each other? Why are they important? When are they required?
- Minimum Accessibility Standard Assessment (MASA) – What are MASA? Who Should Complete the Assessment?
- Parking Standards: What is the NPPF Policy for Local Parking Standards? What is DALP Policy? What does other national legislation say, like Manual for Streets?
- Air Quality- Halton's Air Quality Strategy and Management
- Freight Management
- Planning Conditions and Informative- What are the main legal powers relating to use of conditions? What approach should be taken to using conditions? Discharging and Modifying Conditions Once Permission is Granted.
- Enforcement, Monitoring, and Implementation

Time Schedule of SPD Preparation and Next Steps

Timescale for SPD Preparation and Adoption

Below is an indicative timescale for the preparation and adoption of the SPD.



Next Steps

This consultation will run for a minimum of four weeks. Following the consultation, Council Officers will review comments received, which will inform the drafting of the SPD. A public consultation will then be carried out on the draft SPD.

Following the consultation on the draft SPD, comments received will be reviewed with appropriate amendments made to the SPD before it is adopted at a Halton Borough Council Executive Board meeting. A Consultation Statement will be produced containing details of all those consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised and how those issues have been addressed within the SPD.

How to get involved?

This document has been prepared to identify the scope of the emerging Transport and Accessibility SPD and raise awareness of, and interest in, the document. Comments are sought on the scope that has been set out through this document and the questions in Section 5 below.

A response form has been created which allows for comments and responses on the questions contained within this document, along with any additional comments if required. This can be found at <https://forms.microsoft.com/e/kukhpvzs2k>

Answering the questions in Section 5 is optional and the Council will also accept other forms of written response.

You can complete and return any comments by email or post to:

Email: forwardplanning@halton.gov.uk

Post: Planning Policy Team, Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes, WA8 7QF

All comments on this scoping report should be submitted by Friday 25th July 2025.

Consultation Questions

1. Do you support the proposal to prepare a Transport and Accessibility SPD for Halton Borough Council?
2. If not, what are the reasons as to why the Council should not prepare a Transport and Accessibility SPD?
3. Do you agree with the broad context and coverage of Transport and Accessibility SPD, as set out in this document?
4. Are there any other matters relating to the Transport and Accessibility that should be addressed through the SPD, beyond those set out in this document? If so, what?
5. Do you consider that further information could be included in the SPD to enable applicants submitting a planning application. If so, what?
6. Are there any specific reports, documents, or guidance that you think we should be considering to inform the SPD?
7. What level of detail should the Transport and Accessibility SPD go into, for example general advice or specific guidance (including case studies)?
8. Do you think it would be helpful for the SPD to include a list of plans, documents and information which would be required to support a planning application?
9. If you believe a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required, please set out why (please see accompanying SEA and HRA Screening Report for further information).