



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Draft Travel Plan Guidance

Foreword (Lead Member)



The Purpose of this Guidance

This guidance is aimed at people who are involved with the planning of new developments within the boundary of Darlington Borough Council, particularly those responsible for the preparation, submission, and implementation of the development's travel plan. This will include but not be limited to developers, transport consultants, schools, and planners.

The guidance is designed to ensure developers produce and implement travel plans to a consistent format and standard contributing to the goals and objectives of national and local policies (as outlined in (Appendices 1 and 2).

The guidance will outline:

- 1. What travel plans are and why we ask for them**
- 2. Types of travel plan**
- 3. When a travel plan is required – thresholds for travel plan submissions**
- 4. The process of submitting a travel plan -**
 - a. Modeshift registration**
 - b. Required standards**
- 5. How we evaluate travel plan submissions**
- 6. Your obligations – fees, bonds, and conditions**

Although this guidance has been written to ensure consistency and quality, the system allows flexibility to adapt travel plans to site specific conditions. The guidance will be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit for purpose and we welcome feedback at any time.

1. What Travel Plans are and why we ask for them

- 1.1 A travel plan is a site-specific document for travel behaviour change that can be applied to any setting (education, business, community). Its purpose is to ensure developments within the Darlington Borough Council area minimise the negative impacts of traffic as result of their development and facilitate and promote the use of alternative sustainable transport. Its ultimate objective is to change the behaviour of individuals to more sustainable modes of travel and maintain that change once it has occurred.
- 1.2 A travel plan is not a one-off document; it is a long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that is regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure it continues to achieve its objectives. Darlington Borough Council will be actively involved in this process alongside the owner of the travel plan for the lifetime of the document. It requires the author of the document and the subsequently appointed Travel Plan Coordinator to be familiar with the local transport options and maintain an ongoing communication with all transport suppliers and Darlington Borough Council's Transport Planning team.
- 1.3 Implementing a travel plan is of benefit to both the developer and the user of the site. Different settings may dictate the focus of attention of the plan's action and its subsequent benefits, but popular benefits can include:

For businesses and their employees

- Enhancing image and supporting environmental responsibilities
- Improved staff recruitment and retention
- Reduced car parking spaces and associated costs
- Healthier staff/ reduced sickness levels
- Greater accessibility to site

For housing developers and their residents

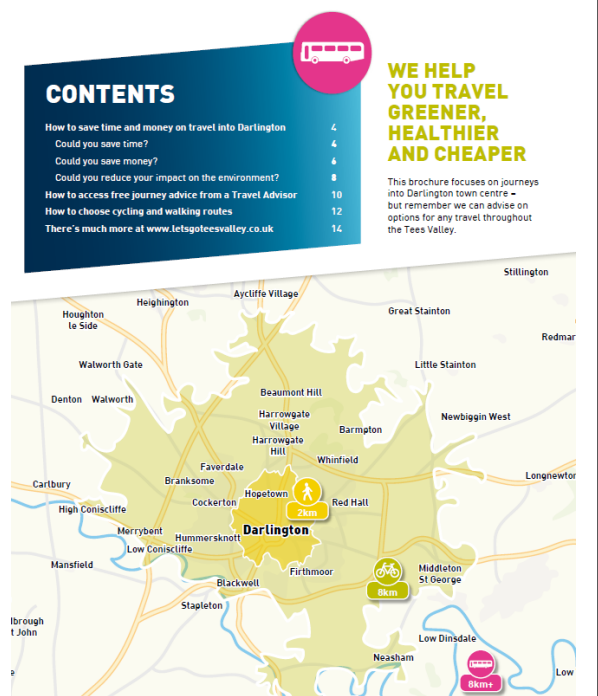
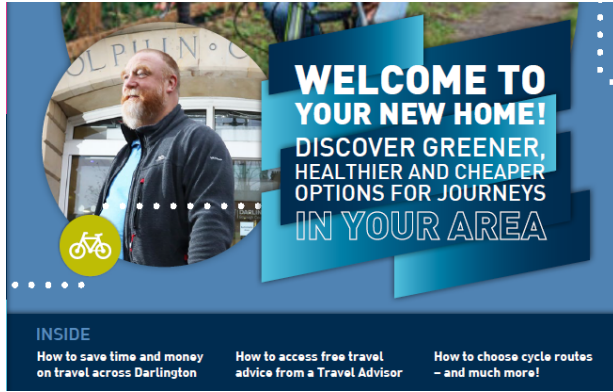
- Improved lifestyles offer
- Enhancing image and supporting environmental responsibilities
- Increased and inclusive transport choices for residents
- Reduced car travel contributing to improved air quality and safer streets

For schools and the pupils/ parents

- Reduced traffic congestion leading to:
Improved traffic safety around the school
Better air quality
- Helping to maintain good relationships with residents
- Enhancing Ofsted reports
- Improved physical and mental health for pupils
- Increased and inclusive transport choices for parents and pupils

- 1.4 The actions within a travel plan can, and should be, adapted to suit the local needs in the Darlington area. It is therefore essential that the author of the plan has good local knowledge to maximise the benefits of the plan.

Case Study – Housing Developer Brochure
 An example of how literature can be adapted to appeal to local residents



2. Types of Travel Plan

- 2.1 This guidance refers to travel plans as a holistic description of the document. However, Darlington Borough Council recognises and accepts two types of travel plans. Any plan submitted should aim to support the aims and objectives of the local and national policies (Appendices 1 and 2).
- 2.2 **Framework** - A Framework Travel Plan is a document submitted when the occupiers of the development are unknown. It sets out basic principles for the site as whole in preparation for the future occupier’s plans.
- 2.3 **Full Travel Plan** – A Full Travel Plan is submitted where the proposed use and accessibility needs are known, and targets can be set. All elements of the plan should be tailored to the end occupier(s) – eg residential / school / workplace.

3. When a Travel Plan is required – Thresholds for Travel Plan Submissions

- 3.1 Travel plans will be required for all development proposals exceeding the council’s thresholds (Appendix 3 - Travel Plan Thresholds), and in other circumstances where local factors make one necessary. Local factors could include but are not limited to:

Change of Use applications: Change of use applications will be considered as new development and will require a travel plan if the thresholds set out in Appendix 3 or 3a are exceeded.

Multi-occupation of one site: Where several small developments or an initial small-scale development is incrementally increased or different use types on one site may individually fall below the thresholds set out in Appendix 3. The cumulative impacts of these individual developments or uses can be enough to justify a travel plan for the site.

Increased Car Parking Applications: From existing businesses, organisations and schools seeking to increase car parking capacities without linked development will be required to show that a travel plan has been in place and fully implemented and other options to reduce car use have been implemented.

Town Centre Development Any development within the Town Centre will require a travel plan.

- 3.2 It should be noted that although Appendix 3 sets out the development thresholds above which travel plans would normally be expected, the Highways Authority will assess applications on their own merits. This may result in some cases where a smaller development warrants a travel plan or larger sites where a travel plan is not justified. Applicants should assume, however, that where a threshold is exceeded a travel plan document will be required and discuss the need and scope for the document with the Highways Authority at the earliest possible stage of the application.
- 3.3 We stipulate a threshold of over 50 C3 dwelling houses for a travel plan, however the Highways Authority retain the right to request a travel plan for developments with fewer dwellings in circumstances where it is considered/likely to impact on sustainable transport in that area. Again, discussion with the Highways Authority is recommended at the earliest possible stage of the application.
- 3.4 The submission of a travel plan is not a guarantee that a proposed development will not be objected to on highways grounds if other supporting documentation, such as a Transport Assessment, does not demonstrate acceptability in highways terms

4. The process of submitting a Travel Plan –

- a) **Modeshift Registration**
- b) **Required Standards**

a) **Modeshift Registration**

- 4.1 Framework and Full Travel Plans are to be submitted using the [Modeshift STARS](#) platform.

The platform is a comprehensive travel planning tool that:

- Creates, develops, and supports travel plans
- Assists in monitoring and evaluation
- Recognises and rewards excellence for the promotion of sustainable and active travel

- 4.2 The platform is divided into three areas:
- STARS Education** – for all travel plans relating to educational establishments up to and including KS4
 - STARS Community** – for all residential and community travel plans
 - STARS Business** – for all other travel plans including business, FE/HE, retail and NHS sites

- 4.3 Modeshift STARS allows users to collect data and information linked to a site or a collection of sites and to input into the system. This process is more efficient than paper and PDF travel plans. Users of the system will save time when putting together a travel plan and they will be able to access their site's information online at any time. By providing clarity and a standardised approach towards what is required in a travel plan, this will allow the quality of travel plans submitted in support of planning applications to be assessed in a fair and consistent way.
- 4.4 Any previously written documents not using this format will need to be transferred and adapted to use this system. Requests for exemptions to this process will need to be submitted in writing to the Highway Authority for consideration. The Modeshift licence for Darlington Borough Council travel plans is paid for by the council and organisations can therefore utilise the platform free of charge, up to and including the Bronze level of accreditation. (Schools can utilise the platform free of charge to any level of accreditation). Further information on the Modeshift fees can be found [here and details of accreditation for business, residential](#) and educational plans can be found [here](#).
- 4.5 Registering to use the system can be undertaken in one of two ways:
- By completing the contact/register section at www.modeshiftstars.org website or
 - By contacting the Transport Planning section at Darlington Borough Council.
- 4.6 Once you register and gain access to the platform you will be able to locate your development/organisation and begin to input the required information into the headings. A full range of guidance is included within the platform.

Note Darlington Borough Council's Transport Planning Officer will assign a travel survey through the system. Currently this can be completed electronically or on paper (and inputted into the system).

b) Required Standards

- 4.7 Framework Travel Plans – If a Framework Travel Plan is submitted, the Green standard must be attained prior to planning permission, being granted. Following this, individual Travel Plans for site occupiers (when known) must be written and submitted within three months of occupation. These subsequent plans must attain Bronze Standard within 12 months of occupation. The Modeshift platform allows multiple occupier travel plans to be linked to their framework plan for administrative purposes.
- 4.8 Full Travel Plans – If a Full Travel Plan is submitted it must attain Green standard prior to planning permission, being granted. Upon occupation all Travel Plans must attain Bronze standard within 12 months of occupation (unless agreed otherwise with Darlington Borough Council)
- 4.9 It is hoped that all travel plans will go on to achieve higher standards in subsequent years and be recognised with a higher-level award. Details of the standards to be achieved for business residential and educational plans can be found [here](#).

- 4.10 Baseline monitoring is required for Bronze Standard and will typically be within three months of first occupation. For residential developments trigger points for baseline monitoring will be agreed in relation to anticipated build out schedule and development size but will be in the region of 50% occupation and yearly thereafter for the life of the plan (five years post completion/full occupation). Prior to development, baseline data can be ascertained using census data for the ward, or data from a similar development. All travel plans must be updated on an annual basis until post five years, completion/full occupation of the site.
- 4.11 **NOTE** As you will read, all plans submitted using the Modeshift platform require the planning and implementation of 'Travel Initiatives' and 'Supporting Initiatives'. There are however initiatives that will be compulsory elements of travel plans submitted to us and these will be in addition to the required number of initiatives required by Modeshift. These compulsory elements will be secured via s106 agreements and/or planning conditions, details of which are included in the section – 'Your Obligations – Fees, Bonds and Conditions'.

5. How we Evaluate Travel Plan Submissions

- 5.1.1 Evaluation criteria to approve travel plans submitted on the Modeshift Platform will include:
- All sections of the plan need to be completed as required for the Green or Bronze standard and kept up to date.
 - We require a named Travel Plan Co-ordinator. Where the TPC has yet to be appointed, an interim named contact (such as the author of the travel plan) will need to be retained and held responsible for the plan until the TPC is appointed.
 - Baseline survey data is required to set targets from
 - Targets need to be set
 - A commitment to annual monitoring is required for a period of the life of the travel plan

6. Your Obligations – Fees, Bonds and Conditions

- a. **Monitoring Fee**
- b. **Personalised Travel Advice Fee**
- c. **Travel Implementation Bond**
- d. **Conditioned Initiatives**

a) **Monitoring Fee**

- 6.1 In all cases where a travel plan is required, the Council will require the developer to enter into a Section 106 Agreement. This will include payment of a travel plan monitoring fee of £2850, which will be payable to the Council by the developer. The full fee amount should be submitted in one payment on signing the Section 106 agreement and is non-refundable. This fee does not apply to educational travel plans.

- 6.2 The fee amount is based on 15 hours per year of Darlington Borough Council officer time @ £38 per hour (RPI index linked from a base of 2021) to carry out the following duties over five years of the life of the Travel Plan:
- Modeshift user system set up
 - Administrative duties including survey set up and monitoring of deadlines
 - Evaluation of travel plan submission
 - Ongoing annual review of the travel plan and subsequent feedback/discussions with the Travel Plan Coordinator for the next year's measures.
- 6.3 In some cases, particularly for residential developments, monitoring may be required beyond the five-year period. In these circumstances, fees required beyond five years will be agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.4 The fee does not cover the actual conducting of surveys, data inputting onto the Modeshift platform or analysis as this is the responsibility of the Travel Plan Coordinator.
- 6.5 Guidance on local authorities' ability to use fees is available in DfT/CLG's Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process. In addition, Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 gives the power to local authorities to charge for discretionary services. These are services that an authority has the power, but not a duty, to provide.

b) Personalised Travel Advice (PTA) Fee

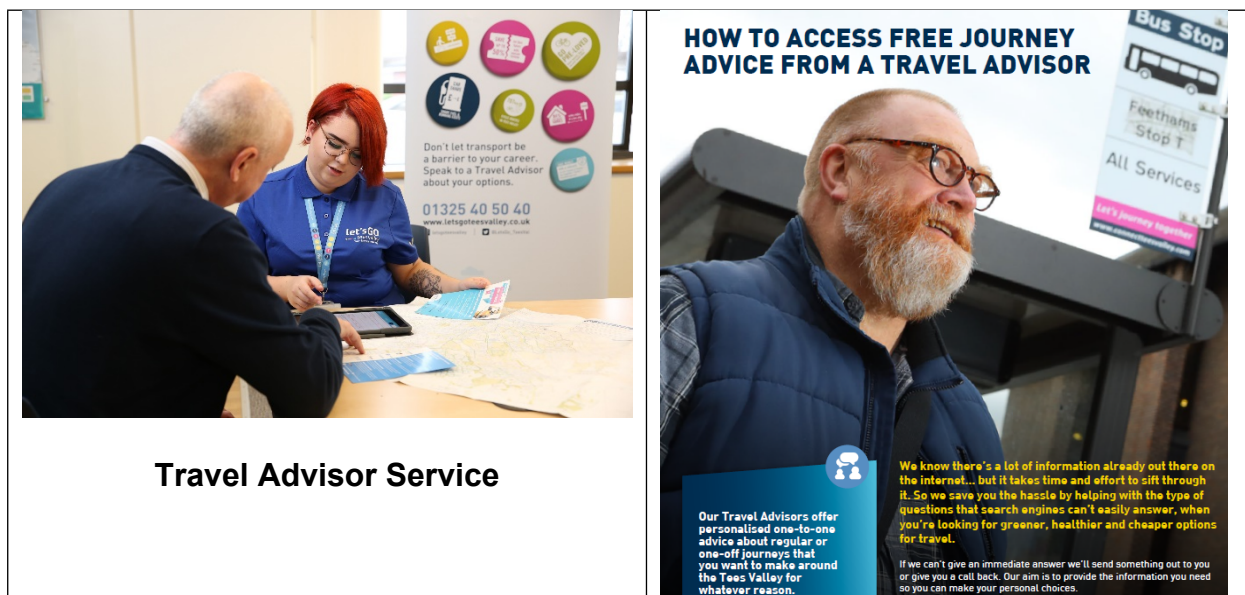
- 6.6 In all cases where a travel plan is required, a personalised travel advice fee **will/may** be payable to the Council by the developer. In all cases where a personalised travel advice fee is required, the Council will require the developer to enter into a Section 106 Agreement. The full fee amount should be submitted in one payment on signing the Section 106 agreement and is non-refundable. This fee does not apply to educational travel plans.
- 6.7 The fee required will be dependent on the type of development:
- For residential developments the fee will be £300 per household
 - For business developments the fee will be £100 per full time employee (cumulative). (FTE)

The full fee amount should be submitted in one payment on signing the Section 106 agreement, is non-refundable and is RPI index linked from a base of 2021.

- 6.8 Monies secured by this process will be utilised by the travel advisors from the Tees Valley behaviour change programme to offer a personalised travel advice service. As a minimum this offer will include:
- Face to face meetings using techniques such as motivational interviewing to have discuss the travel choices available to staff or residents.
 - Surveying of current and potential travel habits

- The provision of a bespoke journey plans to encourage a more sustainable option
- The provision of travel resources to enable people to plan their own sustainable journeys
- The provision of incentives such as taster tickets to encourage sustainable transport take-up
- Follow up surveys to assess modal shift for those accepting incentives

6.9 The process will require close cooperation with the development's Travel Plan Coordinator and reference to this will be required in the travel plan document. It is anticipated that the PTA will be delivered within 3 months of individual house occupation or employment start date.



c) Travel Plan Implementation Bond

6.10 In all cases where a travel plan is required, a travel plan implementation bond will be payable to the Council by the developer. In all cases where a travel plan implementation bond is required, the Council will require the developer to enter into a Section 106 Agreement. The full bond amount should be submitted in one payment on signing the Section 106 agreement. This bond does not apply to educational travel plans.

The bond required will be dependent on the type of development:

- For residential developments the bond will be £200 per household
- For business developments the bond will be £50 per full time employee (cumulative). (FTE)

The bond is RPI index linked from a base of 2021.

- 6.11 This bond would be repayable on successful completion of the travel plan for its full term. Successful completion of the plan is deemed as:
- The developer/owner retaining responsibility for funding and implementing the travel plan, its incentives and initiatives, (PTA services excepted if PTA fee paid)
 - The appointment and retention of a travel plan coordinator
 - The surveying, monitoring, and annual reporting for the lifetime of the plan
 - The achievement of targets at full build out
- 6.12 Darlington Borough Council would retain the bond to implement remedial measures if the developer/owner did not meet the agreed set targets and / or comply with the agreement. The payment of the bond cannot be used as mitigation to the production and implementation of the travel plan.

Examples of remedial measures could include – but are not limited to:

- Further personalised travel advice and incentives
- Additional promotional events
- Additional promotional resources
- Cycle training /Buddy up scheme for individuals or teams
- Implementation of a car sharing scheme
- Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs)
- Provision of sustainable transport infrastructure
- Bus service subsidies

d) Conditioned Initiatives

- 6.13 In appropriate circumstances specific initiatives, as listed in the Modeshift platform, will be conditioned within the planning consent. These incentives must be included within the actions of the travel plan and are in addition to the number and type of incentives required to achieve the Modeshift standards.
- 6.14 These initiatives could include (but are not limited to):

Car clubs for residential developments

Car clubs should be provided/investigated for residential developments where Darlington Borough Council is of the view that the conditions are suitable to support their set-up and ongoing success. In these circumstances, measures such as the provision of infrastructure (such as marked parking bays and electric vehicle charging points for car club vehicles), the promotion of the car club, and a contribution towards the set-up costs of the car club should be provided by the developer.

Working with the local authority to support sustainable travel in the community

The developer must include in their travel plan how they intend to work with staff at Darlington Borough Council and the Tees Valley behavioural change programme to

maximise the impact of their initiatives. This would include specific actions and SMART targets.

New residents or employee welcome pack with travel information

Developers must provide appropriate information on travel options to and from the development including the promotion of sustainable transport. Developers must consult with Darlington Borough Council prior to the development and publication of any information to ensure accuracy and obtain approval.

Secure discounts with local bike shops and/or public transport operators

Discounts should be investigated and provided at developments where Darlington Borough Council is of the view that the conditions are suitable to support their set-up and ongoing success.

Assistance with this document can be provided by contacting:

Transport Planning Officer

Darlington Borough Council

Janet.easley@darlington.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Travel Plan Policy Context – National

Appendix 2 Travel Plan Policy Context – Local

Appendix 3 Travel Plan Thresholds

Appendix 1 Travel Plan Policy Context – National

[National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's approach to the location and design of developments to ensure that plans protect and explore opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. A core planning principle of the NPPF is to actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable. The framework promotes the hierarchy of preferred modes of transport, from walking and cycling, public transport, car sharing, the use of electric vehicles and finally to single occupancy car use, as the last option.

[Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy \(DfT\)](#) This Strategy aims to create a walking and cycling nation; with a long-term goal (up to 2040) that walking, and cycling become a normal part of everyday life, and the natural choice for shorter journeys such as the commute to school, college, and work or leisure trips.

[Gear Change](#) A bold vision for cycling and walking 2020 (DfT) This plan describes the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation. It sets out the actions required at all levels of government to make this a reality.

[Cycle Infrastructure Design 2020 \(DfT\)](#) This guidance supports the delivery of high-quality cycle infrastructure to make cycling and walking the natural choices for short journeys or as part of a longer journey with supporting objectives to increase cycling and walking levels. It reflects current good practice, standards and legal requirements.

[Education and Inspections Act 2006 \(DfE\)](#) The Act requires local authorities to promote sustainable travel and to support choice and flexibility of educational provision. It also extends the right to free transport for children living in lower income households.

Public Health and NICE Guidelines

- [Promoting physical activity for children and young people, NICE Guidelines \[PH17\] January 2009](#) Provides guidance on promoting physical activity among children and young people, including parents and carers, with a series of recommendations.
- [Public Health Guideline PH41 Physical Activity: Walking and Cycling](#) Sets out how people are encouraged to increase the amount they walk or cycle for travel and/or recreation purposes.
- [NICE Guidelines NG13 Workplace Health: Management Practices](#) Examples of how to improve the health and wellbeing of employees, placing it at the core of the organisation.
- [Working Together to Promote Active Travel - \(Public Health England\) - May 2016](#) Looks at the impact of current transport systems and sets out the many benefits of increasing physical activity through active travel.
- [NICE Guidelines NG70 Air Pollution: Outdoor Air Quality and Health](#) This guide brings together air quality, active travel and car transport.

Further historical information on travel planning can be found in the following publications:

- Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process (DfT / CLG, 2009)
- Building Sustainable Transport into New Developments (DfT, 2008)
- The Essential Guide to Travel Planning (DfT, 2008)
- Guidance on Transport Assessments (DfT & CLG, 2007)
- The Travel Plan Resources Pack for Employers (DfT, 2006)
- Making Residential Travel Plans Work: Guidelines for New Development (DfT, 2005)
- Behavioural Insights Tool Kit, Social Research and Evaluation (DfT, 2011)

Appendix 2 Travel Plan Policy Context – Local

[Tees Valley Climate Change Strategy 2010-2020](#)

This strategy represents how the five Local Authorities within the Tees Valley will come together with one aim and vision; to reduce their carbon footprint. As part of this there are opportunities that can be used to reduce emissions from cars by using technology and different behaviours, this includes workplace travel plans, school travel plans personalised travel planning, public transport information and marketing, travel awareness and car clubs. The actions within this strategy state the following:

- Prioritise improving public and sustainable transport in local transport planning and increase the provision of facilities for cyclists throughout the Tees Valley.
- Develop travel plans to influence people's travel behaviour towards more active and sustainable options such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- Prioritise active and sustainable travel. Public sector organisations will improve the environmental impact of their fleet vehicles.
- Include climate change impacts in Transport Asset Management Plans and ensure that footpaths and cycle routes are maintained in good condition so that people are encouraged to use them.

[Darlington Borough Council Local Plan](#) – to be adopted but will include high level linkages.

[Darlington Borough Council Transport Plan](#) - yet to be consulted upon and adopted.

[Darlington Town Centre Transport Plan](#) - yet to be consulted upon and adopted.

[Darlington Borough Council Parking Strategy](#) - yet to be consulted upon and adopted.

[Darlington Borough Council Planning Obligations - Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#)

This document provides clarity and detail about the Council's approach to secure planning obligations, which are also known as developer contributions or S106 agreements. These are legal agreements negotiated between the Council and developers or landowners as a result of a planning application, to secure infrastructure required to help mitigate the impact of new residential or non-residential development. As part of this document there is a requirement for new residential and non-residential developments (of a certain size) to provide a travel plan to help mitigate the impact of the development with regard to travel options.

This Travel Plan Guidance document updates the SPD and will be integrated into future revised versions of the SPD.

[Darlington's Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2022](#)

The Health and Wellbeing plan for Darlington places the community at the heart of commissioning intentions to improve health and wellbeing and to reduce health inequalities for the population. This plan seeks to turn that strategy into action which makes a difference in people's lives, and helps the residents of Darlington live healthier lives for longer; that makes Darlington a "Healthy Community" -

A healthy community encourages:

- *Active healthy lifestyles that are made easy through the pattern of development, good urban design, good access to local services and facilities; green open space and safe places for active play and food growing and is accessible by walking and cycling and public transport.*
- *The creation of healthy living environments for people of all ages which supports social interaction. It meets the needs of children and young people to grow and develop, as well as being adaptable to the needs of an increasingly elderly population and those with dementia and other sensory or mobility impairments.*

Appendix 3 Travel Plan Thresholds

Land Use Pre 2020	Land Use Post 2020	Measure	Travel Plan Required
A1 Food retail	E(a) Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food	Gross Floor Area	>800 sq. m
A1 Non-food retail	E(a) Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food	Gross Floor Area	>1500 sq. m
A2 Financial and professional services	E(c)(i) Financial services, E(c)(ii) Professional services (other than health or medical services)	Gross Floor Area	>2500 sq. m
A3 Restaurants and cafes	E(b) Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises	Gross Floor Area	>2500 sq. m
A4 Drinking establishments	Sui Generis	Gross Floor Area	>600 sq. m
A5 Hot-food takeaway	Sui Generis	Gross Floor Area	>500 sq. m
B1 Business	E(g) E(g)(i) E(g)(ii) E(g)(iii)	Gross Floor Area	>2500 sq. m
B2 General Industry	B2 General industrial E(g) (previously class B1) (Gross Floor Area	>4000 sq. m
B8 Storage or distribution	B8 Storage or distribution.	Gross Floor Area	>5000 sq. m
C1 Hotels	C1 Hotels - Hotels, boarding and guest houses	Bedrooms	>100 bedrooms
C2 Residential institutions— hospitals, nursing homes	C2 Residential institutions – Residential care homes, hospitals and nursing homes	Beds	>50 beds
C2 Residential institutions— residential education	C2 Residential institutions - Boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres	Students	>150 students
C2 Residentials institutions— institutional hostels	C2A Secure Residential Institution -	Residents	>400 residents
C3 Dwelling houses	C3 Dwelling houses - C3(a), C3(b), C3(c), C4 Houses in multiple occupation	Dwelling unit	>50 units
D1 Non-residential institutions	E(e) E(f) F1(a) F1(b) F1(c) F1(d) F1(e) F1(f)	Gross Floor Area	>1000 sq. m
D2 Assembly and leisure	F2(c) F2(d) Sui generis:	Gross Floor Area	>1500 sq. m
Education establishments	Increase in pupil numbers and/or further development of the site		
Others	Discuss with Darlington Borough Council		