

Subject: stakeholder response to Draft Regulation 18 Sandwell Local Plan
Date: 19 December 2023 09:42:11

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Dear Sandwell Planning department,

We apologise for the late response,

Please find below, Sustrans comments regarding the local plan which we hope you can take into consideration:

I hope this letter finds you well. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the Sandwell Local Plan, specifically in relation to the transport section. As an active travel charity, Sustrans is dedicated to promoting sustainable and active modes of transportation, and we believe that a well-planned and accessible transport network is essential for the well-being and connectivity of communities.

We have carefully reviewed the draft plan and would like to offer the following comments and suggestions:

Permeability Across Motorways and Key Route Network:

We recommend a thorough consideration of permeability across the motorway and key route network for pedestrians and cyclists. Ensuring safe and convenient crossing points is crucial for promoting active travel and creating an integrated transport network.

Interactions of Multi-Modal Journeys:

The plan should emphasise the importance of seamless interactions between various modes of transportation. Integration between walking, cycling, and public transport is essential for creating a cohesive and user-friendly transport system.

Inclusion of National Cycle Network:

The draft plan lacks explicit mention of the National Cycle Network. We recommend its inclusion as a key element in the cycling chapter to highlight the importance of regional and national connectivity for cyclists.

Road Space Reallocation and Speed Management:

The plan is unclear on the need for road space reallocation or changes in speeds to prioritise active travel. We suggest that a default consideration of reallocating road space and managing speeds should be incorporated to promote active travel.

Inclusion and Diversity in Accessibility:

While accessibility is briefly mentioned, the plan should elaborate on inclusion and diversity, ensuring that design for active travel accommodates everyone, including those with diverse mobility needs.

Linking Developments to the Network:

The plan should emphasize how new developments will link to the existing network. Consideration should be given to creating secondary networks to fill gaps, ensuring a comprehensive and well-connected active travel infrastructure.

Car Parking Ratios in New Developments:

Given Sandwell's high ratio of car parking in new developments, we recommend exploring policies that support and incentivise active travel, potentially reevaluating parking requirements to encourage walking and cycling.

Car Parking on Kerbs as an Issue:

The plan should address concerns related to car parking on kerbs as it may impact the safety and convenience of pedestrians and cyclists. Policies should be developed to minimise such issues and promote a safer environment for active travel.

Public Transport Accessibility for All:

The plan should emphasise the importance of making public transport accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities. This involves not only physical accessibility but also ensuring that information and services are inclusive.

Promotion of Active Travel Initiatives:

We would encourage the inclusion of initiatives to actively promote walking and cycling, such as public awareness campaigns, community events, and educational programs to foster a culture of active transportation.

Community Engagement in Planning:

We advocate for meaningful community engagement in the planning process, ensuring that local residents and stakeholders have a say in the development of the transport network to address specific community needs and concerns.

In conclusion, we believe that addressing these points will contribute to the development of a transport network that prioritises sustainability, accessibility, and the well-being of the community. We appreciate your consideration of our comments and look forward to continued collaboration in fostering a transport system that aligns with the principles of active travel.

Thank you for your attention to these matters.
Sincerely,

Alistair Crisp

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