

Planning for Buses in New Development

Consultants View

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Introduction to buses

- They provide travel for people who do not have access to a car;
- They move more people along a corridor of limited vehicle capacity;
- They contribute to health and climate goals; and
- They reduce car trips associated with new development

Table 1: Mode split of all trips in England, 2022 percentages (source: NTS)

2022	England excluding London	London	Urban Conurbation	Urban City and Town	Rural Town and Fringe
Walk	30%	39%	31%	33%	31%
Local Bus	3%	12%	8%	3%	3%
Other public transport	2%	13%	8%	2%	1%
Car	62%	33%	51%	60%	62%
Other private transport (including cycle)	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%



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Our next issue will be published on 13 November 2023

Bus passengers pass pre-Covid levels for first time in three years as £2 cap boosts use

TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR
by Peter Slonham

The number of people taking the bus outside of London in England has returned to pre-pandemic levels for the first time, industry figures suggest.

Bus use was badly hit by the Pandemic restrictions and was slow to return, as with rail travel, though car use bounced back much more strongly.

But after several months of steady growth this year, Tuesday 12th October was the first weekday when more people travelled by bus than on the equivalent day before the pandemic, according to data from Ticker, now the UK's most widely deployed smart ticketing systems supplier, with Electronic Ticketing Machines (ETMs) on buses throughout the UK.

The data is echoed by a number of individual operator comments, some of whom report even higher bus passenger levels, though in some areas patronage remains depressed, particularly where service levels have been cut back due to commercial pressures and reduced local authority support. Concessionary travel generally remains below pre-Covid levels.

Overall, usage levels seem to be continuing to grow week on week, with the £2 maximum fare introduced earlier this year with Government support credited as a key factor in helping to drive greater usage.

Since the £2 bus fare cap was introduced across the UK on 1 January the scheme has helped cut bus fares in England outside London by 7.4% between June 2022 and June 2023, the Government says, with savings even bigger in rural areas where fares have dropped by almost 11%.

According to initial monitoring analysis of the £2 cap scheme from a recent report published by the Department for Transport the scheme has helped encourage people to get back on the bus, with almost half of respondents saying the fare cap is the main reason they are using the bus more.

On Tuesday 12th October, bus travel levels passed those last seen on a weekday in March 2020 for the first time, following several Sundays when bus use exceeded pre-pandemic levels across the UK, thanks to a booming demand for leisure travel which has reshaped demand patterns as on rail, with weekends now becoming as busy or more so than workdays.

Rail usage is still overall at only 83% of pre-pandemic levels, according to the latest government figures whilst car traffic levels are consistently now more than pre-pandemic.

Commenting on the latest news about bus use, Graham Vidler, CEO of the Confederation of Passenger Transport, which represents the UK's bus and coach sector, said: "Government must seize this opportunity to unlock the full potential of bus with a longer-term nationwide funding settlement. The growing number of bus passengers demonstrates the central role buses play in so many people's lives."

He said operators had striven to make the bus as attractive as possible for passengers, investing in cleaner, greener vehicles.

After a surge of support under The Boris Johnston premiership and then cutbacks to it, the government has seemingly swung its transport priorities more towards buses again in recent months, with a series of new funding deals including support through the Bus Service Improvement Plan awards to

Continued page 3

LTT/Landor and the Bus Centre of Excellence are holding an important conference on planning for growth in the sector in Leicester on 6/7 November. Places are still available at the Quality Bus event.

Book here <https://bit.ly/3FBDrMr>

Summit sets new agenda for shaping transport change

Transport professionals increasingly finding themselves in the front line of battles for hearts and minds over plans and policies for the transport system were offered help by new thinking at the Local Transport Summit just held in Sheffield.

The event provided an opportunity for a full and open debate about the best responses, stimulated by a succession of insightful and expert speakers including the Shadow Transport Secretary Louise Haigh and former minister Norman Baker.

LTT reports on the lively and productive discussions on pages 18-23.



BUSES ARE BACK!

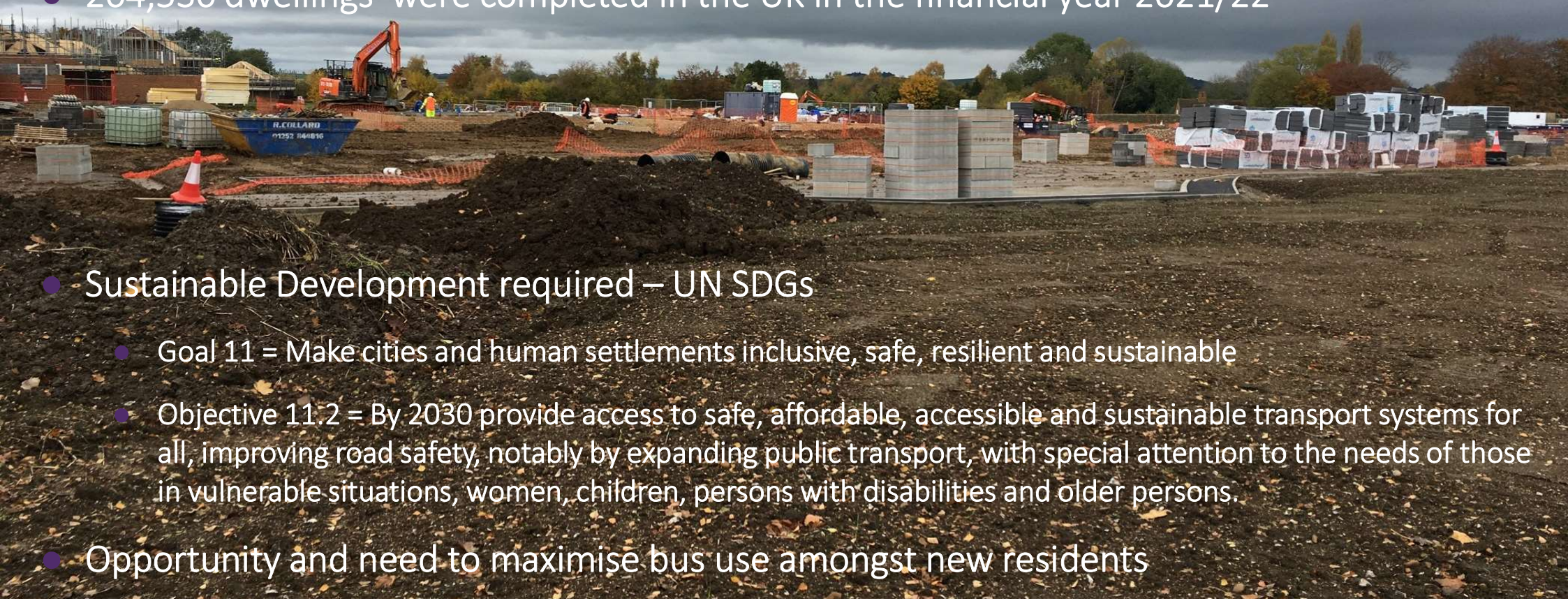
New Housing Development

- There is a global housing crisis, a shortage of homes and demand growing rapidly
- The current UK Government has an ambition to build 300,000 new homes per year
- 204,530 dwellings were completed in the UK in the financial year 2021/22

- Sustainable Development required – UN SDGs

- Goal 11 = Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Objective 11.2 = By 2030 provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons.

- Opportunity and need to maximise bus use amongst new residents



The Government's Bus Back Better Strategy (2021)

- Outlines a vision to transform bus services across England's regions outside London, underlining a commitment to support both Service Operators and Local Authorities in delivering substantial improvements to service routes and frequencies, vehicle comfort and efficiency, as well as simpler fares.
- Strong bus networks connect communities, enhancing accessibility to jobs and services and boosting economic growth and inclusion.
- A reformed bus service network is key to sustained progress against both net zero and levelling up objectives, as well as the National COVID-19 recovery.
- Backed by 'transformative, long-term funding' the National bus strategy sets clear targets to increase patronage and raise buses' mode share substantially beyond pandemic levels.



National Planning Policy Framework

- At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- Considers ‘Plan Making’ and ‘Decision Taking’;
 - *108: Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
 - *116 (a): give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use*
- Safe and suitable access to the site for all people;
- Improvements that cost-effectively limit the significant impacts;
- Development only refused or prevented on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts are SEVERE;

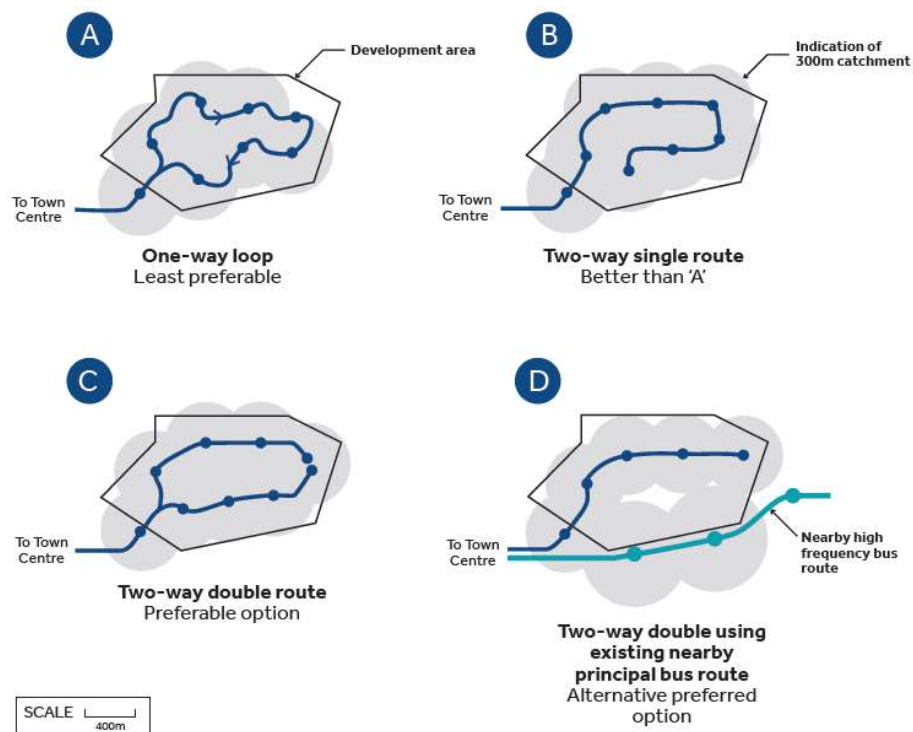
Useful Guidance

- CIHT (1999) Planning for Public Transport in Developments - Withdrawn
- Stagecoach (2017) Bus Services and New Residential Developments
- CIHT (2018) Buses in Urban Developments

Figure 7: Achieving easy access to stops – theoretical example.

Direct routes (C and D) are preferable to loops. One-way loops particularly should be avoided (A).

The development should have sufficient density and/or land use mix to support high-quality services.



Where is it going wrong at the moment

- In Plan Making

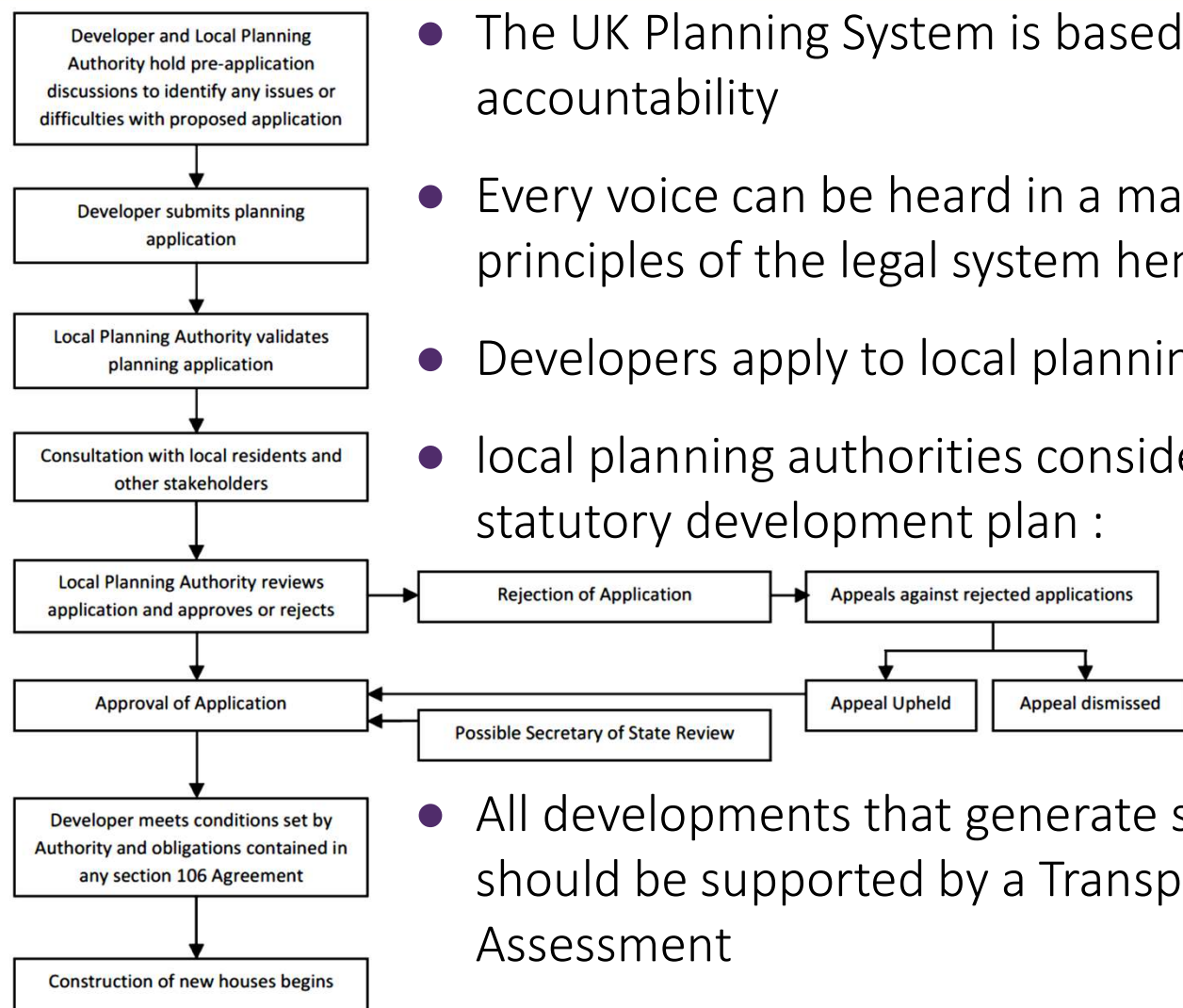
- Weak acknowledgement of the role of bus in Local Plans
- Development strategies oblivious to public transport opportunities
- Ill-conceived policy proposals for individual development
- Comprehensive bus service and infrastructure proposals required to serve strategic allocations

- In Decision Taking

- No or limited bus service improvements with major developments
- Poor Bus Stop facilities or lack of bus stops proposed
- Urban/Street design problems



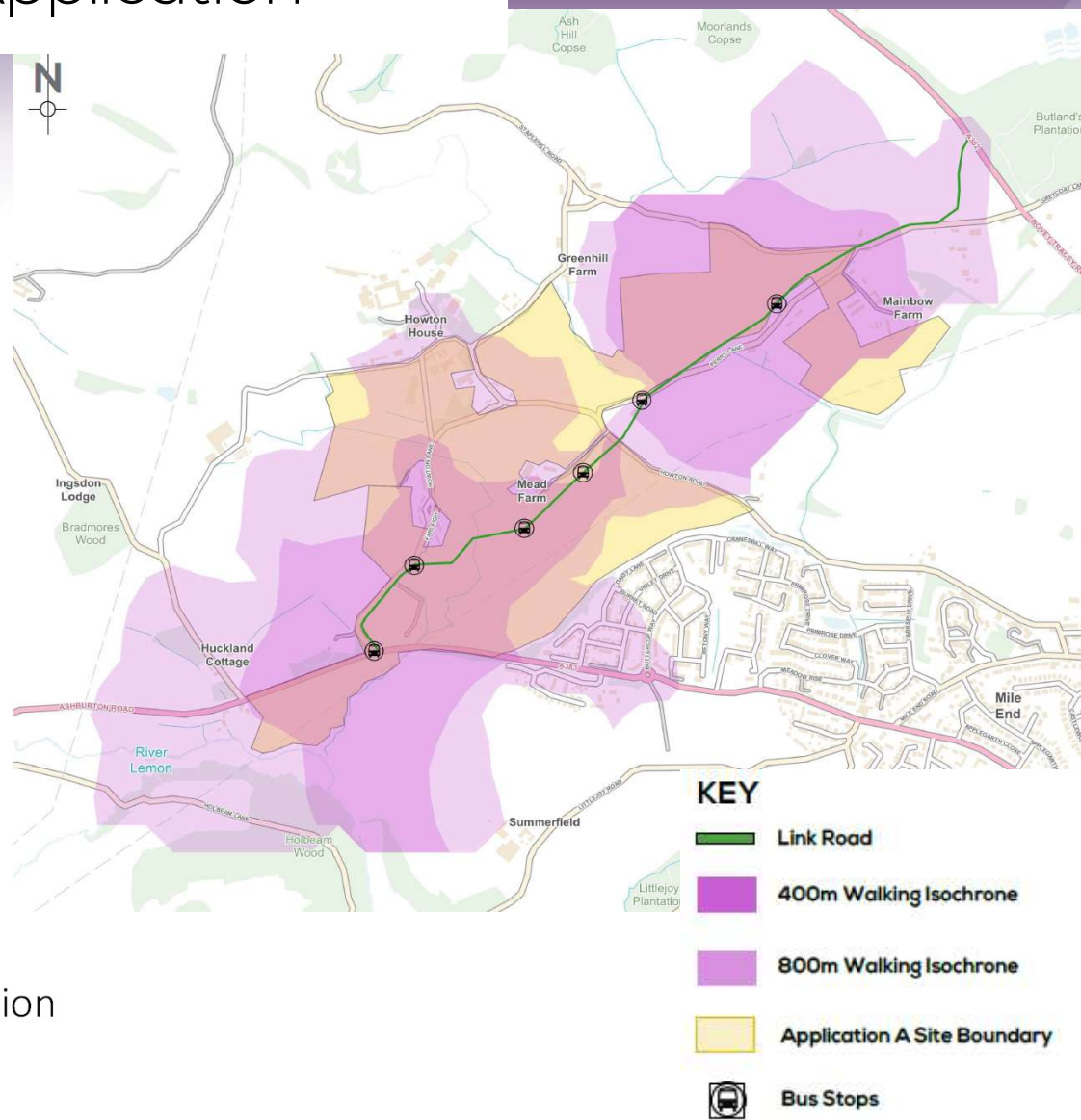
The Planning System



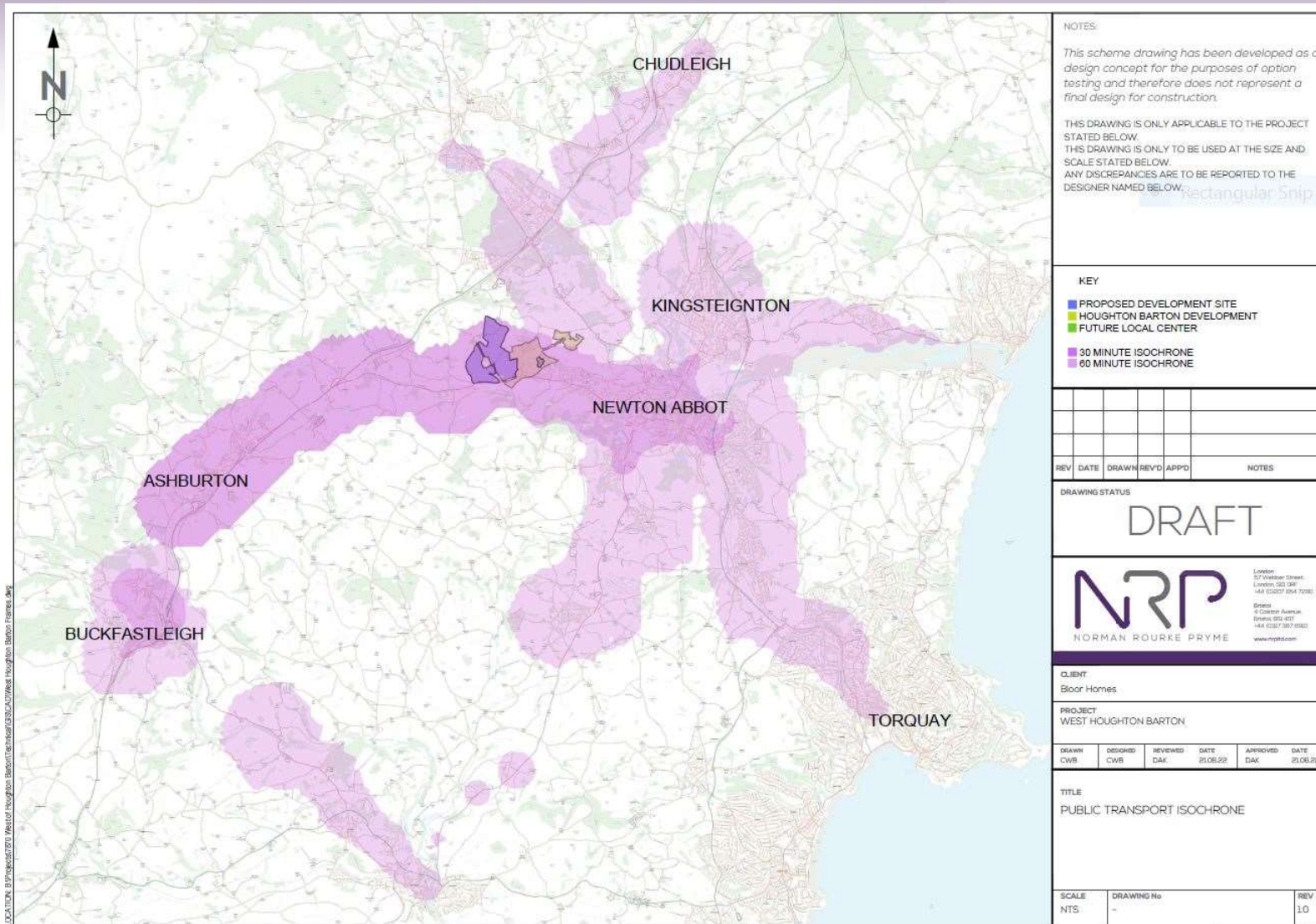
- The UK Planning System is based on private land ownership, but public accountability
- Every voice can be heard in a matter consistent with the wider principles of the legal system hence NIMBYism has a powerful voice
- Developers apply to local planning authorities for planning permission.
- local planning authorities consider whether it is in line with the statutory development plan :
- All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment

Consultants Role – Planning Application

- Design and Access Statement
 - Input to Masterplan
 - Movement Framework
- Transport Assessment
 - Review existing bus services
 - Assess Bus Accessibility
 - Predict demand for bus services
 - Consider bus service improvements
- Travel Plan
 - Target for increasing bus use
 - Measures – bus taster tickets, information
- Negotiate Bus Contributions



30 and 60 minute bus isochrone



Key Consultees (England)

- Local Highway Authority
 - Development Management Officer
 - Public Transport Officer
- National Highways
 - Secretary of State retains power of direction (equivalent to old Article 14 direction)
 - Can ask local planning authorities to refuse/place conditions
- Network Rail
- Active Travel England
 - Statutory Consultee from 1st June 2023
 - Housing developments of over 150 homes.
- WHO'S INTERESTED IN BUSES?



Developer Contributions

- Necessary, relevant and reasonable
- Developer should expect to fund works to provide immediate access to the site
- Necessary works/measures to address adverse impact on the highway network
- Enhanced access for bus
- Developers should not be asked to fund works not related to the impact of the development
- Developments not served by bus – costs are high to remedy situation, commercial risks higher



PhD Research (2013 – 126 sites)

- Transport Planning Practice in Large Scale Housing Development in England
- 38% of the Large-Scale Housing Developments located within 400m of a main local transit corridor such as bus, tram or underground with a service frequency of 20 minutes or greater. 47% were within 700m.
- Designing bus service improvements essential for most new developments



Development Category	A	B	C	D	E
Range (dwellings)	200-249	250-299	300-425	426-749	750+
Average Density (dwellings/hectare)	69	46	78	143	270
Mixed Use (% developments)	24	36	45	88	96
Bus Access (% developments)	8	14	41	50	80

Case Study: Cranbrook

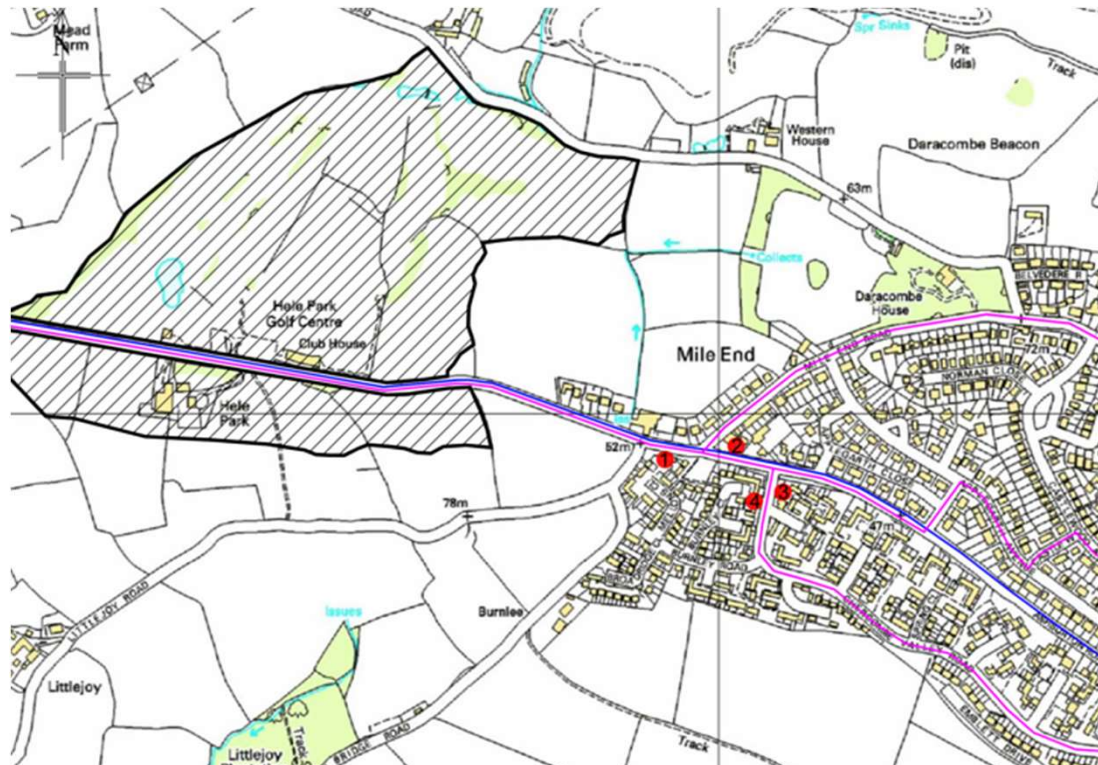


- Layout to support bus route
- Regular stops and shelters (western part)
- On-street parking impedes flow
- No interchange with station

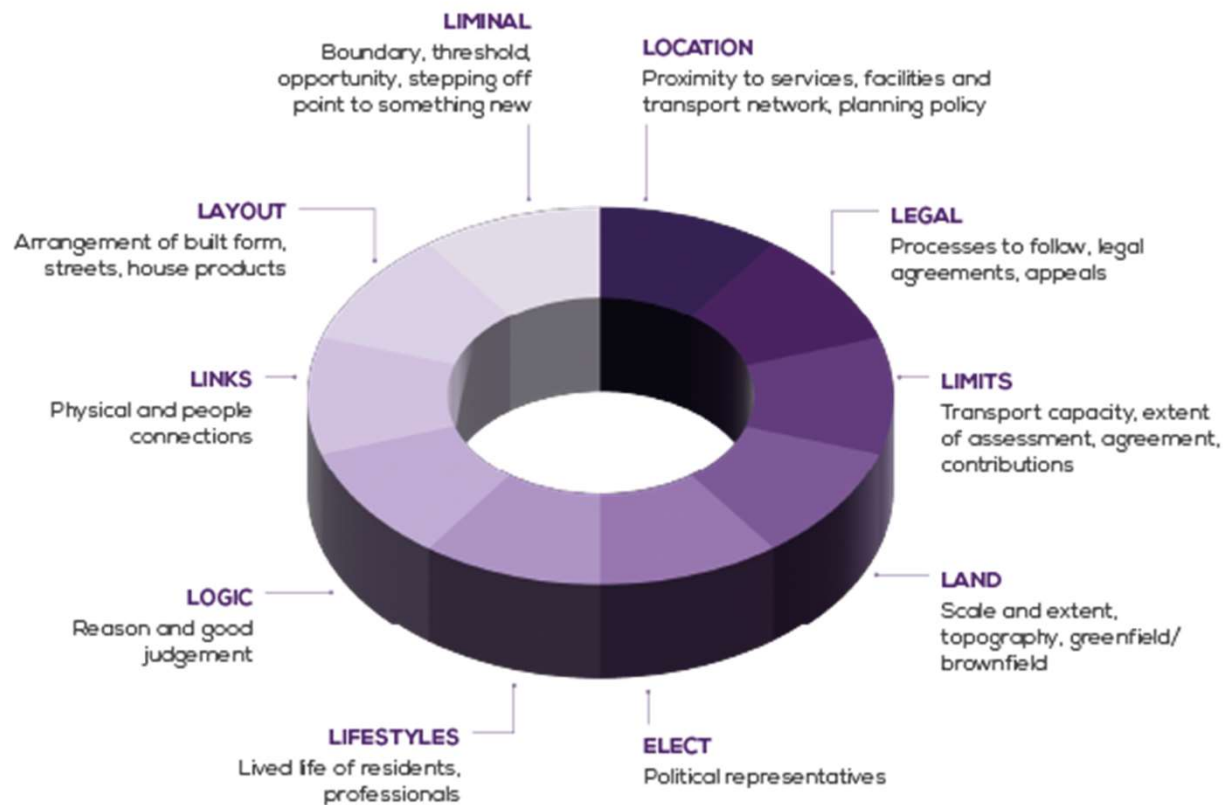


Case Study: Hele Park, Newton Abbot

- Combined 20 min bus services to town centre
- Bus stop facilities not well planned.
- Ransom strip prevents extension into wider scheme



The constraints and opportunities the Development Transport Planning Practitioner works with



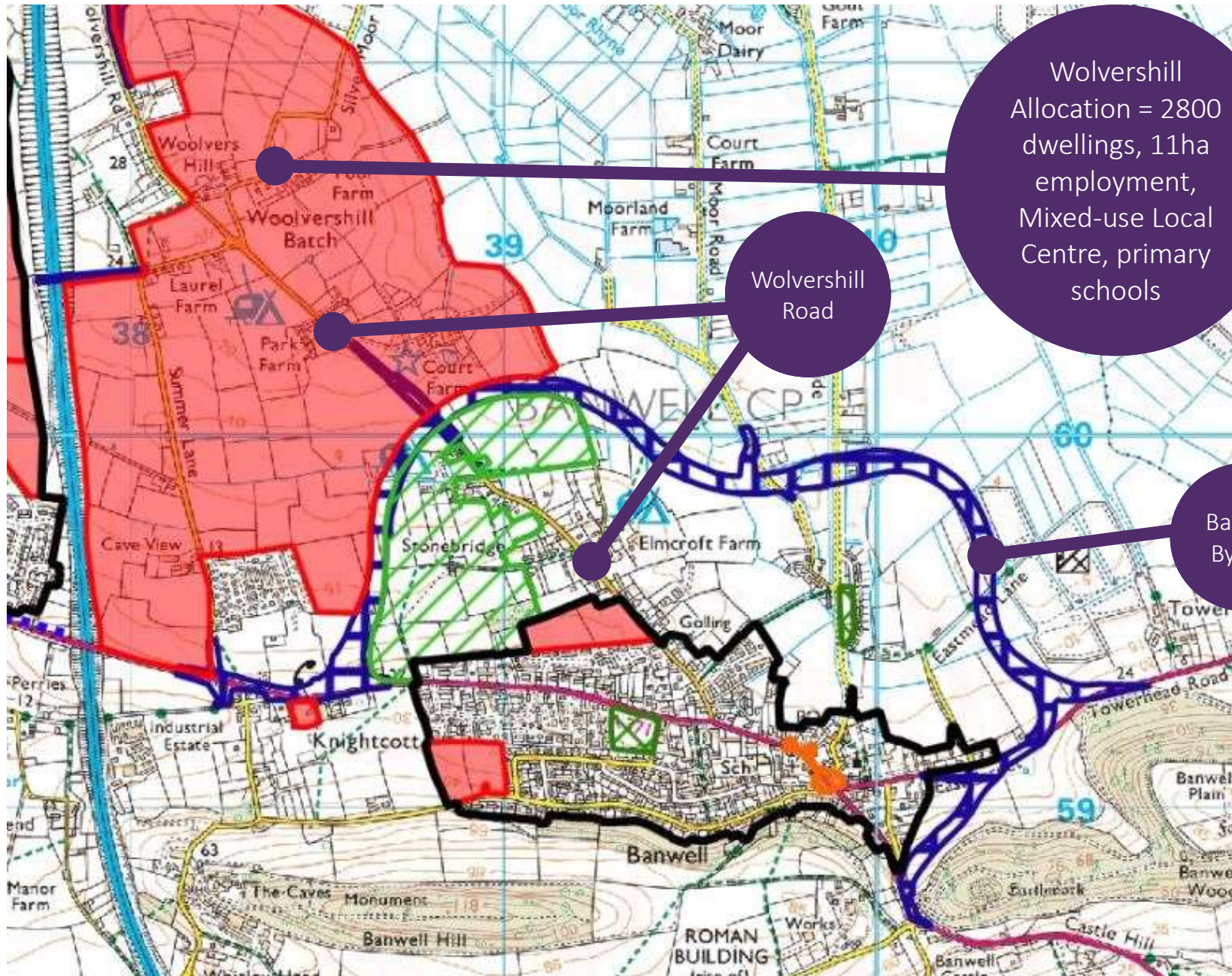
The 10 'L's applied to planning for buses in new Development

The 10'L's provide a framework for considering the opportunities and constraints that the Transport Practitioner will need to consider in achieving the desired outcome of a sustainable development.

The framework helps in the navigation of the necessary planning process.

Planning for buses with the 10 Ls

- Liminal – an exciting vision for bus travel at the development
- Layout – input to masterplan – bus routes and facilities
- Links – making the connections with Bus Operator and Public Transport Officer
- Logic – a well judged and comprehensive strategy using good technical tools
- Lifestyles – influencing travel of future residents through Travel Plan
- Elect – support from Council Members – political alignment to support bus
- Land – working with land control, physical constraints and development scale
- Limits – appropriate assessment and contribution level
- Legal – application of standards and processes e.g CIL Test
- Location - development policy, proximity to local bus network



Wolvershill Allocation = 2800 dwellings, 11ha employment, Mixed-use Local Centre, primary schools

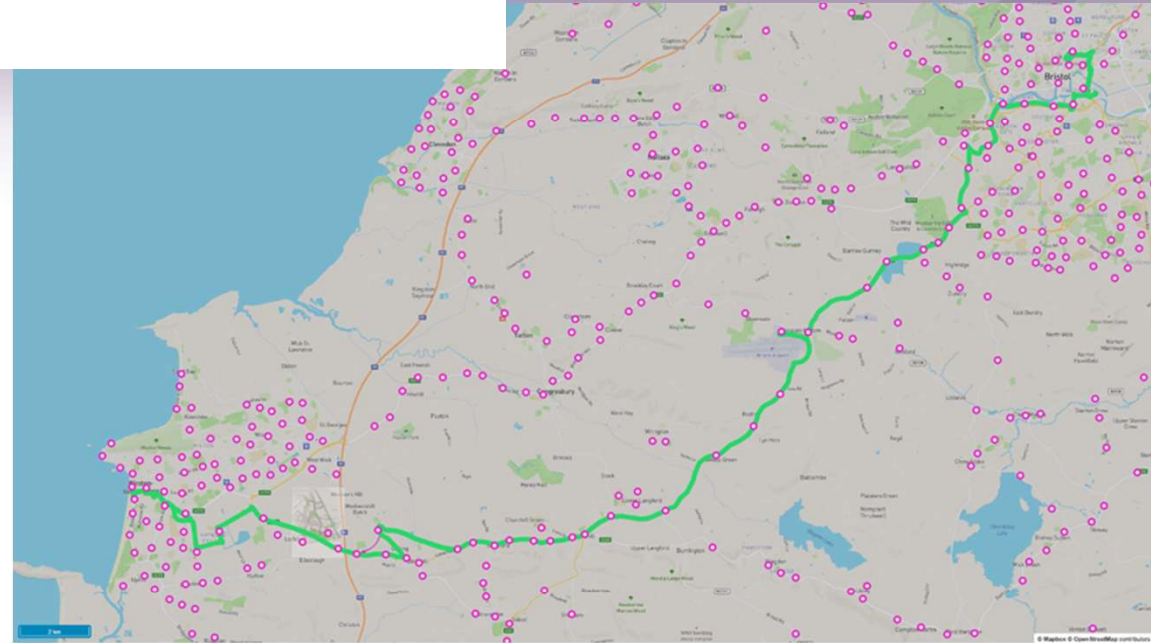
Wolvershill Road

Banwell Bypass

Source: North Somerset Local Plan Emerging Policies Map Extract

PODARIS Bus Modelling

- Assess viability of new bus routes:
 - West to East - Weston-super-Mare to Bristol via A371/A38
 - North to South - Worle station to Banwell
- Podaris software
 - Nested Logit Model
 - Predict modal shares
 - Calculate running cost and revenue



Concluding thoughts

- There needs to be an improvement in planning practice by Authorities and Consultants
 - In plan making and decision making
 - In Transport Assessments
- Better guidance is needed to support Practitioners
 - On assessment in TAs
 - In preparing robust viability calculations
- We have the tools to assess and design bus service improvements
- There is a need to improve the skills of the professional community so the role of the bus in new development is taken more seriously



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