



TRANSPORT FOR NEW HOMES

## CHECKLIST FOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT: Draft, February 2019

This **Checklist** sets out the specific attributes of housing developments that accord with the aims of the Transport for New Homes (TfNH) [Charter](#). The TfNH Charter sets out expectations for housing that avoids people being dependent on cars, and that is served by high quality sustainable transport alternatives.

Suggested scoring system:

When reviewing a particular housing development, consider its merit in terms of each numbered heading. Use scores for each of the sub-headings to inform the overall score for each main attribute.

Suggested score system: +1 (Green), 0 (Amber), -1 (Red)

*(All sub headings are expressed as positive attributes)*

### **LOCATION and CONTEXT**

#### **1. Location avoids car dependency (See Annex A)**

The most important thing to check is the suitability of the location.

- Within or connected (with walk, cycle, and bus/rail) to an existing city or town?
- Located in order to facilitate new or upgraded public transport links?
- At, or can form, a node within an urban bus and/or rail corridor?
- All homes within easy walking distance of frequent public transport? (Maximum 800m for rail services; 300m for bus services)
- Not near a motorway junction?

***There is little point in going further in the checklist if the location is bad.***

#### **2. Planning context is supportive and effective**

- Site(s) identified in a spatial strategy with transport component, coordinating and funding public transport upgrades across a wider area?
- No alternative site(s) that are better located? (Such as within or adjacent to existing urban areas)

- The main destination(s) for residents have measures supporting a choice of sustainable modes? (e.g. parking charges, road user charges, bus priority, rail access)
  - Planned traffic reduction or no net increase? (i.e. provision for increased sustainable transport, and no new road capacity for general traffic) \*
  - Expected positive impact of the scheme on air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, public health and congestion across the wider road network? \*
- \* NB If these cannot be answered with confidence, then the site should not be rated as “green”*

## **DESIGN & CONFIGURATION**

If the location seems appropriate, check the following (to see if the aims of the TfNH Charter will be achieved, or to identify what needs to be changed).

### **3. Density of homes - minimum 75 dwellings per hectare net**

- Sufficient to support high quality public transport (bus/rail)?
- Public transport operator(s) confirmation of this?
- Sufficient density to support local facilities (within walking distance of homes)?

### **4. Mix of uses on site** (*extent to be judged in relation to size of scheme*)

- Mix of uses adds vitality to streets, spaces and places?
- Mix of housing types and tenures (within large schemes; or small schemes contribute to mix in the wider area)?
- Includes affordable housing?

### **5. Local facilities**

- Range of facilities for all age groups, provided or within easy walking distance? (e.g. nursery, school, shops, cafes, pub, community centre, health centre including GP practice, dental practice, indoor sport and leisure facilities, community hall, outdoor sport provision)?
- Green space, parks, gardens, wooded areas, urban trees?
- Local centre within 800 metres walking distance?

### **6. Local employment**

- Easily accessible on foot, cycle and public transport?
- Significant offering for local people? (e.g. 1 job per 10 homes)
- Major employment available within 30 minutes by public transport?

## **TRANSPORT PROVISION**

### **7. Footways and walking routes**

- Integrated with existing streets, paths and adjacent areas?
- Attractive and direct paths (that meet the “5 Cs” criteria: *Connected, Convenient, Comfortable, Convivial, Conspicuous*)?
- Safe to use at all times of day and night?
- Useful spaces for circulation and social exchange/leisure?

- Low traffic speeds? (20mph or less)
- Landscaping integral to design, not leftover spaces?
- Buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?

### **8. Cycle routes and cycle storage**

- Segregated cycle paths and/or low traffic streets?
- Direct routes and integrated with wider network?
- All dwellings have secure easily-accessed cycle storage?

### **9. Public transport services**

- All services operate 7 days a week and evenings?
- At least one public transport service with a “turn up and go” frequency? (every 12 minutes or better)?
- From Day 1 of occupation?
- Provision is certain? (Existing services, or guaranteed mechanism for provision in advance of development, confirmed by bus operator)
- All areas of development within easy walking distance of stops/stations? (Maximum 800m for rail services; 300m for bus services, or 400m for frequency of 10 minutes or better)
- Street layout allows for the efficient (direct and unhindered) movement of buses?
- Stops prominently and conveniently located?
- Priority over other traffic provided where needed?
- Services available to all key destinations from the development? (e.g. town centres, major out of town facilities, major employment areas, transport interchanges)?
- Services well-advertised and/or branded?
- Services affordable and with discounts? (e.g. for youth, unwaged)

### **10. Parking**

- Parking provision less than one space per dwelling? (discouraging car ownership and use)
- Parking controls on street? (limiting car ownership and use)
- Car parking sited and organised so as to avoid negative impact on walking and cycling, and the street scene? (e.g. avoiding frequent driveway crossovers and segregated parking courts)
- Parking/garaging remote from dwellings? (discouraging use)
- No pavement parking taking place/allowed?
- Provision for shared “Car Club” vehicles?

END

#### *Notes to assist scoring:*

- “Frequent” public transport refers to a daytime service interval of 12 minutes or better, and 20 minutes or better in the evenings and early morning, and Sundays. This is for bus and light rail. For heavy rail services the service interval should be every 20 minutes or better in the

daytime, and 30 minutes or better in the evenings and early mornings and Sundays.

- “Density” sufficient for frequent public transport and a good range of local facilities to be viable is likely to be greater than 75 dwellings per hectare, net.

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## ANNEX A - USING THE CHECKLIST

### Purpose of the Checklist:

1. To expose plans for housing that are likely to result in car-dependent lifestyles, and to identify the reasons;
2. To help identify ways in which development proposals can be improved;
3. To assess the outcomes of developments already built so that lessons can be learnt, or that people responsible can be held to account.

### Who should use the Checklist?

- Local authorities, regional government, and any other bodies responsible for, or aspiring to, housing development in their areas;
- Planning and transport authorities responsible for existing urban areas that are impacted by new development outside those areas;
- Bodies concerned with the development process (whose brief includes, for example: health, education, utilities, environment, landscape, heritage, and conservation);
- Private developers and other bodies (landowners, social, charitable bodies etc.) seeking to promote or undertake development;
- Transport authorities responsible for the planning, promotion and/or the delivery of improved transport facilities (public transport, cycling and walking routes and facilities, roads, streets);
- Planning agents and consultants working on behalf of any of the above;
- Consultants working in any field related to transport and spatial planning and development, including urban design and landscape;
- Local neighbourhood and other voluntary organisations seeking to resist unsustainable development.

### When should the Checklist be used?

1. When the location of new housing and other development is being considered (e.g. regional, strategic, local, neighbourhood plans);
2. When new transport facilities are being considered/developed;
3. When masterplanning is being undertaken;
4. When outline planning permission is being sought;
5. When detailed planning permission is being sought.
6. The checklist can also be used to assess the quality of schemes with planning permission, or under way, or completed. In this case check:
  - Mode split of travel generated by the development;
  - Benefits generated for existing/surrounding areas in terms of more sustainable travel, less traffic.

### What action is needed from the Checklist?

- The various criteria should be scored (e.g. using the traffic light system)
- Locations for development should be rejected if they offer little prospect of delivering the aims of the Charter or the specific checklist objectives;
- Alternative locations or forms of development should be considered/put forward/encouraged (including, if appropriate, no development) that offer the prospect of meeting the Charter's aims and objectives;
- Modifications to development plans and proposals should be considered, to improve their correspondence with the Charter's aims;
- Campaigns should be mounted to oppose unsuitable development.

## ANNEX B - REFERENCES

Other documents with sustainable housing development criteria or checklist:  
(These have been taken into account in the preparation of the TfNH checklist.)

- *Building for Life 12 - The Sign of a Good Place to Live*, Birkbeck and Kruczkowski for Design Council, CABI, Design for Homes and Home Builders Federation, Nottingham Trent University, 2015
- *Places Where People Want to Live - 10 characteristics*, RIBA, 2018
- *BREEAM-SE New Construction, Technical Manual 1.1*, Sweden Green Building Council, 2017
- *Active by Design*, Design Council, 2014
- *BREEAM Communities, Technical Manual SD202 - 1.2*, 2012
- *Masterplanning Checklist for Sustainable Transport in New Developments*, Taylor and Sloman, Transport for Quality of Life, 2008
- *London Housing Design Guide (Interim)*, Design for London, 2010
- Cambridge Quality Charter for Growth, Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, and others, 2008
- *Shaping Neighbourhoods - a Guide for Health, Sustainability and Vitality*, Barton, Grant and Guise, 2003
- *Creating Places*, Northern Ireland Department of the Environment and Department for Regional Development, May 2000
- *Urban Design Compendium*, Llewelyn Davies, for English Partnerships and The Housing Corporation, 2000