

4.3 Aspiration 2: Achieve a better connected, accessible Torbay and essential infrastructure

Introduction

4.3.1 Good connections in and around the Bay, and between Torbay and national or international markets, are critical to the Bay's success. Transport has a significant role in addressing the development challenges we face now and in the future. Our quality of life depends on having convenient access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services.

4.3.2 Torbay needs a high quality and integrated infrastructure system to support a strong and prosperous economy in the Bay. With the growing importance of the internet, the provision of superfast broadband connections will be vital to an area's prosperity.

4.3.3 Infrastructure covers a range of items and facilities, including:

- Physical infrastructure, such as roads and railways, electricity, gas and water supply, flood defences, drainage, sewerage capacity, telecommunications etc.
- Social/community infrastructure such as healthcare and education facilities, community centres, libraries, emergency services etc.
- Green infrastructure, such as open spaces, landscaping, allotments, nature reserves and waterways
- Blue infrastructure such as water quality and beaches.

4.3.4 Funding of this wide range of infrastructure is one of the most significant challenges for the Local Plan. Government funding is likely to become increasingly scarce and funding streams such as Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and New Homes Bonus are unlikely to meet the wide range of demands in the Bay. It will therefore be important to make best use of other regeneration opportunities.

4.3.5 South West Water's Business Plan for 2015-2020 was submitted to Ofwat in December 2013. This is based on an assessment of capacity and likely growth of population/households in the area, as a result of ongoing consultation with Torbay Council and other partners, including the development industry.

4.3.6 There is no restriction on development in Torbay. However, a SWW assessment shows that further modelling work will be required should growth rate accelerate and as 2020 is approached. The broad message is that there are no absolute waste water limits to growth in Torbay. Provision of new and upgraded infrastructure will require appropriate programming and costing, especially with the local sewer network.

4.3.7 SWW are aware of concerns about the age of combined sewers. These will be dealt with through its capital maintenance programme eg. freeing up sewer collapses, deformations and fat/debris, and provision of infrastructure for new development. Consistent with the Council's continuing cooperation with the Authority, SWW will be fully engaged in the preparation of masterplans for Future Growth Areas to ensure a robust and sustainable infrastructure framework for these Areas.

4.3.8 Green infrastructure can help encourage walking and cycling, thereby having health benefits. It can also provide wildlife habitats and help support biodiversity. Sustainable drainage measures such as wetlands can have significant wildlife benefits and reduce flood risk. There will be an increasing need for renewable energy and micro-generation as replacements for fossil fuels.

4.3.9 The completion of the South Devon Link Road is a fundamental element of the infrastructure needed to deliver the Local Plan objective of creating a more prosperous Bay. It will provide vital improvement to the links with the sub region and beyond, increasing the accessibility of the Bay for business

travellers, freight operators and tourists whilst improving economic prosperity. In turn, this will create opportunities for business growth and for improving links for existing business and industries of the Bay.

4.3.10 The Western Corridor is a vital connecting route for the Bay as a whole. However, existing capacity and regular delays at various points along the corridor could be exacerbated by future growth. The introduction of junction improvement schemes and the dualling of key sections will improve the capacity of the road and are essential to the function of the network. These improvements must take place ahead of or in tandem with new development, with contributions for those improvements being provided by new development.

Policy SS6

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Strategic transport improvements

The Council will support improvements to the strategic transport system that enhance the connections between the three towns, between Torbay and the rest of the sub-region, and between Torbay and national or international markets. The Council will seek to facilitate delivery of these schemes through the safeguarding of land and/or contributions from development. The following improvements are proposed:

Highway Network:

1. Construction of the South Devon Link Road and related junction improvements;
2. On line improvements and traffic management schemes in the following locations:
 - (i) Torquay Gateway Corridor, Torquay
 - (ii) Western Corridor, Paignton
 - (iii) A385 Totnes Road, Paignton.

Walking and Cycling Network

3. Development of the strategic public rights of way and cycling network, including the extension of the National Cycle Route Network, and the maintenance and improvement of the South West Coast Path. Effective integration with public transport services and linking key residential and employment centres will be encouraged.

Rail Network

4. Maintenance and enhancement of the rail network serving the Bay including new or improved passenger and freight rail services to and from the Bay, a new station at Edginswell, Torquay and enhancement of existing stations.
5. Minimising the impact of development upon level crossings, and where necessary seeking developer contributions to help fund improvements to level crossings, where these are required as a result of development.

Ferry Service

6. Development of a frequent, all-year-round high quality ferry service and necessary land based infrastructure between Torquay and Brixham Harbours and other external ports, including use of water based transport to deliver goods.

Bus and other public transport services

7. Improvements to the bus and public transport networks to service new development and ensure connectivity within and between town centres, district and local centres.

Transport Hubs

8. Development of transport hubs in sustainable locations with good links to existing and planned residential areas, town centres and other retail centres,

healthcare facilities and radial or orbital routes to increase accessibility, in particular in the following locations:

- (i) Broomhill Way, Torquay
- (ii) Gallows Gate, Torquay
- (iii) Occombe Farm, Paignton
- (iv) Churston, Brixham

[View interactive map \(Broadband connection recommended\)](#)

Explanation:

4.3.11 An integrated transport system provides sustainable transport choices and will facilitate sustainable travel into and around the Bay. It is also intended to ensure a smooth running and efficient road network by promoting sustainable travel and by tackling issues that result in localised congestion and regular delays.

4.3.12 The strategic improvements identified in Policy SS6 are divided into those that improve the highway network and those that facilitate more sustainable transport. This reflects the prioritisation in the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3, March 2011), and associated Implementation Plan, in on-going 'Foundation Schemes', such as bus service improvements and minor congestion relief schemes, and 'Targeted Capital Interventions' focussed on small geographical areas, eg. specific junction upgrades.

Strategic Transport Network

4.3.13 To deliver the Local Plan's aspirations and objectives, improvements are needed to ensure the Strategic Transport Network, as well as its component networks, are fit for purpose and accessible, in order to ensure free movement around the Bay and to the wider sub region and beyond. This is vital to delivering economic prosperity and also to support new development.

4.3.14 For example, the provision of clear, legible and direct connectivity between Kerswell Gardens and Torquay Town Centre and Harbour, via Torre, is essential for the successful regeneration of Torquay Town Centre as well as the success of businesses and service providers along the route. Proposals such as junction improvements, a new rail halt, a transport hub and new cycle routes will help improve this route into Torquay and support the role of the South Devon Link Road. These will contribute directly to ensuring the success of the Strategic Delivery policies for Torquay (SDT1 etc), and delivery is intended within the next 3-5 years.

4.3.15 Similarly, improvements to the Western Corridor are underway and scheduled for completion during the two first phases (i.e. years 1-5 and 6-10) of the Local Plan, with substantial completion intended in the next 6 years. This is critical to the delivery of development to the west of Paignton (Policy SDP3) as well as Brixham (SDB1).

4.3.16 Improvements to the A385 Totnes Road (Torbay / South Hams border to Tweenaway Cross) will ensure better connectivity between Torbay, Totnes and national and international destinations for communities and businesses in Paignton and Brixham. A comprehensive solution to transport issues is needed to enable the longer term development in Collaton St Mary (SDP3.3), and development contributions are expected to help fund these strategic improvements.

4.3.17 Improvements to the A385 should also alleviate congestion and reduce rat-running through Marldon/Berry Pomeroy. Improvements to the A385 will be carried out in cooperation with Devon County Council and South Hams District Council. This work is likely to take 10+ years to carry out, and therefore significant development along the Totnes Road Corridor is likely to be towards the end of the Plan period.

Facilitating Sustainable Transport

4.3.18 The improvement and expansion of a safe pedestrian and cycle network throughout Torbay connects residential areas with employment, shops and leisure facilities and connects with the National Cycle Network. This will encourage increased use of walking and cycling for journeys to work, school and for recreational purposes. New developments will play a key role in their

expansion and improvement. Some routes are capable as acting as 'green trails' for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, thereby assisting the implementation of the Torbay Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

4.3.19 In addition, footpaths such as the South West Coast Path, and the National Cycling Network, are valuable tourism and recreation assets.

4.3.20 Footpaths and cycle paths should be designed to accommodate wheelchair and mobility scooters, for example by being of sufficient width, clear of unnecessary obstructions and with appropriately designed gates. Further guidance can be obtained from the Council's Highways Team and in the NHS National Institute for Clinical Excellence Guidance 41: "Walking and Cycling".

4.3.21 New developments may require the creation of additional bus services or stops to be provided to ensure the standard of provision is retained or enhanced, for instance by providing new destinations or increased weekend running. All residential areas should have access to education, employment and healthcare within 45 minutes by public transport, with an aim to achieve a minimum daytime service frequency of 30 minutes wherever possible throughout Torbay. There is also a commitment to continue improvements to bus information services. In considering the extension of these services, the Council will have regard to the cost and viability of the service. It is important to ensure that public transport is as financially viable as possible, given the likely scarcity of public sector subsidy.

4.3.22 The rail network provides a vital connection not just throughout the Bay but to the sub-region and beyond. The rail network south of Paignton to Kingswear is operated by the Dartmouth Steam Railway. An integrated transport system must include new and additional train services to and from the Bay. Securing additional main line inter-city routes between Torbay, London and Birmingham is vital to provide fast and efficient long distance travel. Demand for local services between Torbay, Newton Abbot and Exeter is strong and future measures, such as the Devon Metro scheme, are proposed to increase the capacity and frequency of services, with new stations serving expanding, mixed use communities such as at Torquay Gateway, and halts outside Torbay, specifically Kingskerwell. The Council will support measures to expand rail services past Paignton, subject to other Policies in the Local Plan and the Local Transport Plan.

4.3.23 Water transport also provides a valuable form of transport for commuters and tourists. A new regular all year round ferry service is proposed from Brixham to Torquay. This will help to reduce the reliance on the road network to access Brixham, whilst also reducing the Bay's carbon footprint and total number of car trips on the highway. There could also be ferry connections from Torbay to other external destinations along the South Coast and beyond. New ferry services do not require planning permission per se. However, harbourside and on-shore facilities and improvement will be supported subject to the other Policies of this Plan.

4.3.24 The development of well located, high quality transport hubs can help to reduce town centre congestion and pollution, reduce car journey length and improve the accessibility of urban centres. A number of these are proposed in the Local Plan, in locations that will help deliver the transportation objectives set out in TA1 and TA2.