

## WMCA Board

<b>Date</b>	22 March 2019
<b>Report title</b>	Park & Ride Policies and Principles - Towards a Strategy
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	WMCA Programme Board - 8 March 2019 WMCA Senior Leadership Team - 27 February 2019 Senior Transport Officers Group - 25 February 2019 TfWM Leadership Team - 4 February 2019

### Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

#### The WMCA Board is recommended to:

- (1) Agree the aims set out in Section 4 that detail the positive impact park and ride will have within the West Midlands wider Integrated Transport Strategy.
- (2) Agree the policies set out in Section 4 (Table 1) to govern the future development, funding and management of park and ride.
- (3) Agree the principles set out in Section 5 for taking forward a site by site review of potential schemes to implement charging and space booking infrastructure for park and ride.

- (4) Agree the principles set out in Section 5 for the development of any currently uncommitted future park and ride proposals.
- (5) Instruct the progression of a development framework and funded implementation plan for future park and ride by TfWM in partnership with the Local Authorities.
- (6) Note that the proposed approach follows the direction of the 8 February 2019 WMCA board in respect of developing options for potentially introducing parking charges at existing park and ride sites.

## **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a set of park and ride aims, policies and principles which will guide further work on a development framework and implementation plan.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 Movement for Growth (MfG), the WMCA's statutory adopted Local Transport Plan, identifies park and ride as an important component in integrating the rail and rapid transit network with the wider transport system. MfG also commits to increasing secure cycle parking at park and ride sites.

2.2 The MfG 2026 Delivery Plan adopted by WMCA Board in October 2017 set out a commitment to create "an evidenced and prioritised strategy for strategic park and ride provision".

## **3.0 Review of Park and Ride Best Practice**

3.1 Evidence from a wide review of documented impacts of park and ride in the UK and worldwide suggests that park and ride in the UK is best regarded as a successful measure within economic strategies to promote further growth within successful cities which tend to include major commercial centres with intense competition for space. Actual traffic reductions (and consequential reductions of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions) in large urban areas resulting from additional park and ride provision can often be relatively small and short-lived. They are also significantly off-set by background increases in travel demand from growing population and employment. This has been corroborated by modelling of park and ride in the West Midlands.

3.2 In appropriate locations there is a strong economic and strategic case for park and ride. Well located park and ride can directly and indirectly deliver economic benefits by:

- Increasing accessibility to major destinations such as city centres, thus increasing access to employment and the size of the labour pool and market available to the businesses, retail and leisure activities located there;
- Providing capacity for growth in travel demand where located strategically towards the periphery of dense urban areas and accessible to corridors of existing high demand;
- Supporting relatively short-term changes to travel demand which could support better network management during major events (such as temporary sites to support the Commonwealth Games); and
- Providing remote parking solutions where parking provision at the actual destination is restricted.

3.3 Park and ride has generally been perceived as successful in the West Midlands where it is observed to be so popular that demand has outstripped capacity. This in turn leads to ongoing calls for further expansion, with new capacity being provided where land and funding is available. However, the popularity of park and ride is not in and of itself enough to consider park and ride successful; success should be measured against achievement of strategic objectives.

3.4 The findings of a review of park and ride in the West Midlands suggest that park and ride has had mixed success in delivering against previous objectives and there are key issues with its usage. There are opportunities to optimise the way we deliver future park and ride provision. The review concluded that continuation of the approach as-is...

- ...would not be financially sustainable – maintenance and operation of existing provision is fully subsidised through the WMCA transport levy at an estimated cost of £2.4m per annum in 2017/18, which is set to increase to £3.2m per annum by 2024/25 – an increase of over 30%.
- ...could worsen the existing imbalance of supply and demand;
- ...would over-incentivise the use of park and ride by those who have viable and realistic alternatives (exacerbating an existing issue where approx. a third of existing users drive less than a mile to park and ride leaving less space for those who live further away);
- ...would continue to constrain the availability of park and ride for those who may lack viable and realistic alternatives (park and ride is only available to those who can travel very early, which in particular excludes its use by those who cannot due to family/caring responsibilities);
- ...could worsen detrimental impacts on nearby streets and neighbourhoods; and
- ...would miss opportunities for transit oriented development (and regeneration).

- 3.5 It is estimated that approximately 78% of TfWM's existing park and ride capacity is used by a small group of 8,300 frequent users (a group less than 0.3% the size of WMCA constituent authority population).
- 3.6 The majority of park and ride users (87%) emanate from households where the chief earner is employed in a profession within the white collar, non-manual ABC1 banding of the NRS' social grades classification system. This contrasts wider West Midlands households where just over half of chief earners (52%) are in this banding.
- 3.7 84% of the existing park and ride users live within the WMCA's constituent authority area and 73% use park and ride to commute to Birmingham city centre. London is the next most popular destination (8% users travel to London).
- 3.8 The current approach to managing park and ride can result in some locations experiencing significant volumes of on-street parking on surrounding local highways. Whilst the highway authorities are accountable for managing these streets, both the highway authorities and the local transport authority (WMCA) are jointly responsible for the problems and solutions.
- 3.9 Many of the issues in the West Midlands are observed elsewhere in the world where park and ride is provided for free on a first come, first served basis. Typically, charging and space booking measures have been introduced elsewhere to manage these issues.
- 3.10 The approach to providing park and ride for free has been inherited from the approaches taken by WMCA/TfWM precursors. Since the approach was originally adopted there have been a number of key changes that support a change in policy:
- The majority of car parks at West Midlands rail stations serving urban areas beyond the metropolitan area now charge;
  - Government grants that were previously received to cover the cost of park and ride have been removed;
  - Government austerity policies in place since the financial crisis of 2007-2008 have significantly reduced local government funding; and
  - WMCA/TfWM are no longer exposed to financial risk associated with rail patronage, which could be mitigated by providing park and ride (previously, West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive was exposed to risk as a co-signatory of a prior West Midlands Rail franchise).

- 3.11 The business case for free park and ride provision by any given organisation would normally be based on a reduction of the organisation's exposure to financial risk on other activities which the park and ride supports, or where it significantly supports wider strategic objectives. As currently structured, the financial case for TfWM providing park and ride for free is poor as it does not offer the local authorities or WMCA a direct financial saving or revenue stream to off-set costs.
- 3.12 Developing new capacity will result in increased on-going costs and there are three broad options available to do this in a financially sustainable way:
- Find a significant and reliable revenue source to offset park and ride costs;
  - Reduce park and ride capacity elsewhere to release budget; and/or
  - Relinquish control and financial liability of park and ride to another party.

#### **4.0 Towards a New Approach**

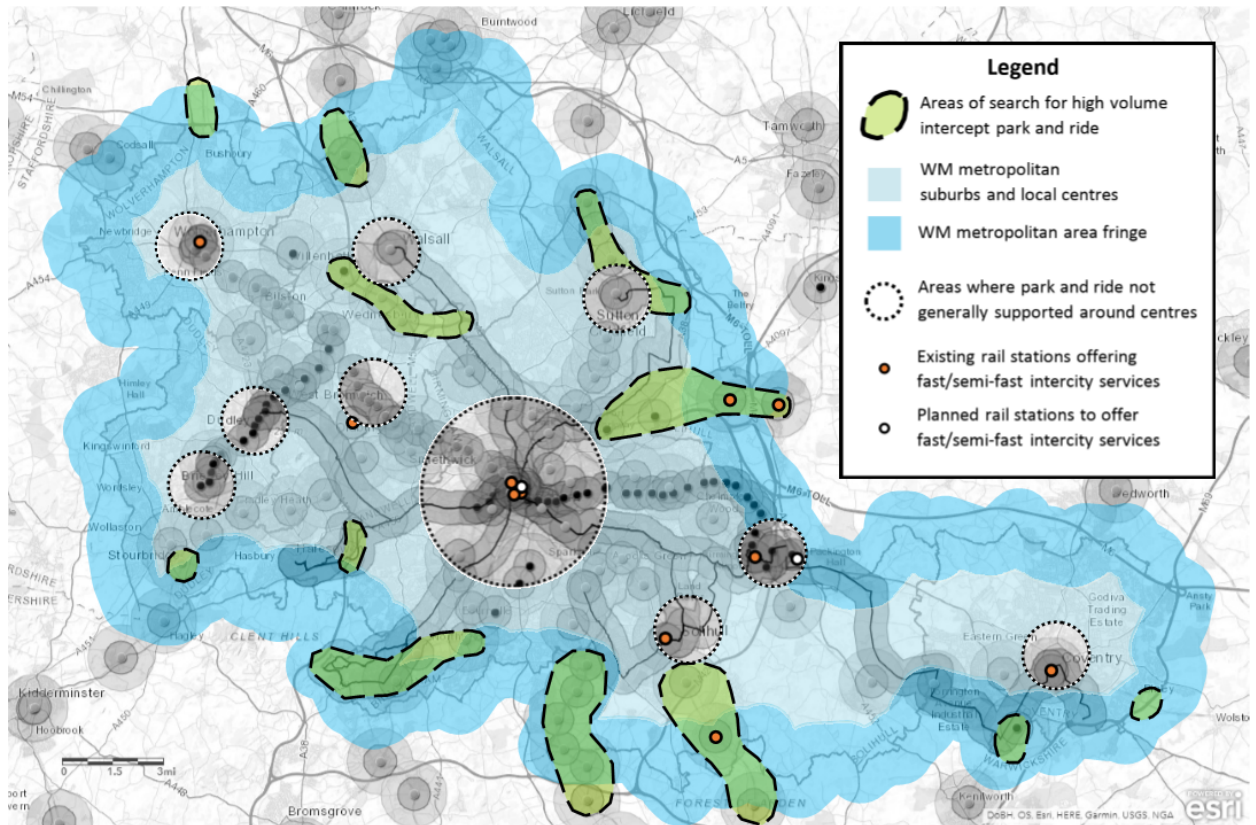
- 4.1 Ultimately, a fully developed rail and rapid transit network will provide a more comprehensive coverage of the metropolitan area with excellent direct access for all network. However, in the interim there is a critical role for targeted park and ride to play in helping residents access the rail and rapid transit network as part of an integrated transport system. Even with a fully developed rail and rapid transit network there will be an on-going role for park and ride near to the edges of the built up area to intercept inbound travellers (where users do not live near to inter-urban and local rail stations).
- 4.2 Responding to these needs demands a nuanced strategy.
- 4.3 On the basis of the findings of the review of park and ride, aims are proposed which confirm the positive contribution park and ride will make in the West Midlands as part of our integrated transport system. The aims are as follows:
- 1) To support inclusive growth by enabling greater access to the rail and rapid transit network for those who lack feasible alternatives to access the network by non-car means – improving their connections to employment and wider opportunities.
  - 2) To support business growth and investment by extending the labour market and market reach of businesses located near to the rail and rapid transit network.
  - 3) To support the continued economic success of congested centres by accommodating increasing travel demand and providing choice within a wider strategy to reduce congestion and air pollution by providing a viable alternative to end-to-end car travel.
  - 4) To manage congestion during periods of exceptional demands and reduced capacity from major events and network disruptions through temporary park and ride arrangements.
- 4.4 A set of clear policies for adoption have been developed to provide clear direction on how park and ride will be funded, managed and developed. This will ensure park and ride meets the above aims in a financially sustainable manner whilst ensuring the service delivers the right benefits for the right people in the right locations under the right conditions. These policies are set out in table 1.

Table 1: Policies for funding managing and developing park and ride

Funding park and ride	Managing park and ride	Developing park and ride
<p>Any proposals for new or expanded park and ride schemes would generally be expected to be financially self-sustaining beyond the initial construction costs (including measures required beyond the boundary of the site such as on-street controls).</p> <p>Decommissioning of park and ride sites will be considered where rail and rapid transit network coverage provides residents in the area with viable and realistic alternatives to accessing the public transport network by non-car means; and there is no significant strategic transport access value provided by the site.</p> <p>Park and ride assets owned or operated by WMCA will be supported by commercial strategies which seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the cost of park and ride;</li> <li>• Raise revenue to cover the cost of park and ride, including by means of charging; and</li> <li>• Enable services supported by the WMCA Transport Levy to be as financially self-sustaining as possible.</li> </ul> <p>Unless there are compelling wider benefits or commensurate savings the proportion of the WMCA Transport Levy budget allocated to the operation of park and ride will not be increased.</p>	<p>Wherever practicable at park and ride assets owned or operated by WMCA, measures will be introduced that aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the proportion of users that drive short distances to use park and ride;</li> <li>• Increase occupancy of cars travelling to park and ride.</li> <li>• Reduce the need for users to arrive very early in order to secure a space;</li> <li>• Manage any directly associated surrounding on-street parking that has a significant adverse traffic management or community impact;</li> <li>• Reduce adverse travel market distortions such as rail-heading at park and ride sites where it abstracts demand from better placed transport interchange nodes.</li> </ul> <p>Where practicable, charging and booking measures will be considered as a high priority to achieve the above aims.</p>	<p>Where the private sector is unlikely to invest, WMCA will pro-actively promote park and ride sites with viable business cases in the metropolitan area that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides access to metropolitan/regional services to the West Midlands' well-connected strategic urban centres and/or intercity services to other key UK cities; and</li> <li>• Intercept longer distance traffic in-bound into the metropolitan area and/or serve local catchments.</li> </ul> <p>Development of additional park and ride capacity will be favoured in locations where it offers the earliest feasible opportunity to beneficially abstract car trips from the urban road network.</p> <p>Unless there is compelling strategic reason which supports the better operation of the transport system, developing park and ride will not generally be supported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In congested urban centres.</li> <li>• Within 3 miles of Birmingham City Centre.</li> </ul> <p>There will be a general presumption against the development of park and ride that precludes alternative land uses in the long term and where there is a clear local ambition to use the land for more productive purposes.</p>

4.5 Figure 1 below gives a high-level picture of where analysis has identified 12 areas of search for park and ride sites which would be beneficial in intercepting inbound traffic to the metropolitan area. It also identifies where park and ride would not generally be supported around centres. Any other proposals in the blue areas would be likely to be predicated solely on local demand from station/stop local catchments. It is noted that at the fringe of the metropolitan area, local demand may include demand from some residents from outside the metropolitan area who may lack a closer opportunity to transfer onto the rail and/or rapid transit network in their own local authority area.

Figure 1: High level picture of park and ride development



## 5.0 Principles for a site by site review of charging and space booking infrastructure

- 5.1 In line with the proposed policies, it is proposed to undertake a site by site review of each park and ride site in close partnership with the relevant local authorities. This will identify all issues with the operation, individual business case for the site and local impact and consider the options for introducing a charging and space booking regime.
- 5.2 It is proposed that any introduction of charging should be accompanied with an improvement in the quality and convenience of service that park and ride users experience. It is recognised that the ability to reserve a space would represent a significant improvement in service for park and ride users. Evidence from global examples has shown that space booking can be a useful and popular tool for managing demand for park and ride and its impacts. This is corroborated by the popularity of the existing Save-a-Space trial in the West Midlands, which has allowed for users to reserve a limited number of spaces at park and ride. It is therefore proposed that options for space booking will be explored alongside charging.
- 5.3 The extent to which any charging and/or space booking options would be considered successful will depend on a range of headline factors which shape the site by site review, including:

Table 2: headline factors for assessing success of charging and booking proposals

Factors	Commentary
Behaviour change (and resultant impacts on the wider transport network)	A range of behaviour changes may result from the introduction of charging and booking. Desirable impacts (such as encouraging walking or cycle to a local transport node instead of driving to park and ride) and undesirable impacts (such as switching from park and ride use to driving to congested centres) will be identified.
On-street impacts	Some sites experience a displacement of parking to the surrounding streets. The introduction of a space booking system may partially help address this and the introduction of charge could promote that. The potential requirement and benefits of any local on-street measures such as residential parking will be explored with the local authority. A financial model for the site would consider whether reasonable charging levels are capable of supporting these and covering the costs of on-site charging enforcement and space booking.
The extent to which charging might exclude certain people/groups	<p>Whilst current users of park and ride (and rail in general) are relatively affluent compared with the rest of the WMCA population, the potential accessibility impact of any charging scheme on lower income groups will be explored. This will include potential mitigations as part of a full equalities impact assessment.</p> <p>Subject to the findings and conclusions of the site by site review a public consultation may be required to inform any final decision making.</p>
Impact on customer experience and indirect benefits as a result of supporting infrastructure	Issues like ease of use, transparency of charges and ability to integrate charges with any rail, metro or bus fares are all likely to fundamentally impact the attractiveness and viability and user adoption of any changes. The review will consider both individual local circumstances and a wholistic view of systems across the parking estate with a view to a consistent customer experience. Smarter infrastructure can offer other advantages such as improved monitoring of usage which can be shared live with users and operators.
Revenue and costs	Reviewing evidence from charging elsewhere indicates that charging for park and ride is unlikely to generate surplus revenues, but may allow for a significant reduction in subsidy. The review will consider site by site impacts and the overall financial model with a view to achieving maximum benefits for least overall costs or subsidy.



<b>Factors</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Other local factors	<p>Consideration will also be given to the wider local context, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking costs and supply nearby, in strategic urban centres and at other nearby stations/stops;</li> <li>• Other trip attractors near to park and ride sites such as commercial and retail space; and</li> <li>• Public transport fares.</li> </ul>

5.4 Proposals on the emerging recommended implementation plans for any charging and space booking schemes will be presented back to Members as part of overall implementation plan for park and ride improvements.

## **6.0 Principles for the development of new park and ride**

6.1 The policies proposed above provide the basis for prioritising new park and ride capacity. It's acknowledged that there are also other considerations that would need to be taken into account, as outlined in Table 3.

Table 3: Wider considerations for developing park and ride.

<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Any issues with wider rail/rapid transit access that need to be addressed	<p>Whilst park and ride is a popular mode of access to stations/stops, it is inherently constrained by the space available for parking in a way that other access modes aren't. It also doesn't deliver the health benefits of alternative access modes such as walk to station. Where access can be facilitated by other modes that are not limited in this way this should be prioritised and encouraged.</p> <p>Wherever park and ride expansion is considered, there should also be a review of access by other modes. Where wider access infrastructure is found to be deficient, wider interventions in station and stop access infrastructure should be proposed and considered alongside the case for park and ride.</p>
Availability and quality of land	<p>Park and ride can only be developed where there is land available. In addition, the quality of the land (noting any for example land contamination and hydrology) can fundamentally affect the deliverability and the case for investment.</p>
Local planning policies	<p>Development and design of park and ride will be developed in a way that respects the local planning policies of the local authorities considering factors such as impact on place, green-belt designation and other material considerations. Support for schemes will be necessary from those in the local authorities' remit of economic development and regeneration.</p>
Potential for integrated land use	<p>Where possible and supported, options will be considered that seek integrate park and ride into other more productive uses of land by building park and ride provision above or beneath buildings. Potentially land acquisition for interim use by park and ride prior to subsequent higher value land uses may be beneficial.</p>

<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
Local highway impacts and congestion	Close liaison will take place with the relevant local authority to understand potential issues of on-street parking and how agencies can work jointly to deliver any necessary mitigation. Park and ride development should be avoided where it would cause or significantly add to local/upstream congestion.
Attractiveness of park and ride in the location	Park and ride will be developed with a general expectation that users, who will seek to maximise journey time savings, are unlikely to make a connection between multiple rail/rapid transit services en-route, and will prefer to access higher frequency services where possible.
Planned future changes to the rail and rapid transit network and land use	Proposals for new park and ride and expansion of existing park and ride will need to consider and account for how planned future changes to the rail and rapid transit network and land use will affect the case for park and ride in a given location over its life. Special consideration will be made of the future changes in car usage for access to the public transport network, such as the adoption of self-driving vehicles, car sharing and demand responsive services and taxis.
Financial case for investment	Investment will depend on the availability of capital investment funding sources and income sources to cover ongoing revenue costs. It will also depend on the overall economic case for investment and whether proposals offer value for money to the tax payer.

6.2 In the interim, delivery of the current programme park and ride expansion will continue at Longbridge, Tile Hill, Tipton, Whitlocks End and Bradley Lane. It is noted that WMCA board has already given approval in principle for a charge to be levied at the expanded facilities at Longbridge when it is planned to open in Spring 2020 with the aim to ensure the scheme is financially self-sustaining in the long term.

6.3 Furthermore, work will continue on proposals for temporary park and ride to support the Commonwealth Games and Coventry City of Culture. Proposals for temporary sites will be taken forward in a way that establishes a sound legacy of permanent infrastructure where there is potential case for park and ride in the longer term in line with this report.

## **7.0 Next Steps**

7.1 Following the WMCA Board's consideration and approval a simple short policy and strategy summary reflecting the adopted position will be produced and published on-line.

7.2 A development framework will be produced to assist the further detailed development of future park and ride schemes. This will reflect the policies and principles set out in this report and enable TfWM, the wider WMCA and its constituent authorities to work together in a consistent and objective way to identify and assess options for developing park and ride.

7.3 TfWM in partnership with the relevant local authorities will progress the site by site review of existing park and ride provision and the findings will be wrapped into the development of a detailed costed park and ride implementation plan.

7.4 The implementation plan will include comprehensive review of all known potential new park and ride provision and sites and identify either specific proposals which should be developed, and/or specific areas of search where new strategic park and ride provision would be beneficial. This expected to be complete Autumn 2019.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 The report does not absolutely commit TfWM to particular schemes for development or delivery of measures to raise revenue. However, it does propose consideration of charging in the first instance as a measure to raise revenue within a proposed a commercial approach to funding park and ride, which will aim to improve its financial sustainability.

8.2 Further work is being commissioned to inform the development of park and ride charging and booking policy, and to develop further evidence to support targeting of park and ride. This will be paid for out of existing departmental budgets.

## **9.0 Legal Implications**

9.1 Legal implications will be reviewed as specific scheme and charging proposals are developed.

9.2 In particular with charging proposals, TfWM may be constrained by lease conditions in particular locations. However, TfWM could seek to renegotiate such conditions and devolution discussions offer one pathway to accelerate this – particularly where Network Rail is the land owner.

## **10.0 Equalities Implications**

10.1 Dedicated blue badge parking facilities to provide access to rail and rapid transit are important for those with reduced mobility and/or relevant disabilities. Dedicated blue badge parking facilities may be provided in locations where wider park and ride for general public use is not supported. The issue of blue badge parking is therefore a related but broader issue for rail and rapid transit access. Dedicated blue badge parking is currently integrated into park and ride supply and this report does not propose a change to the relevant local design standards on this issue.

## **11.0 Inclusive Growth Implications**

11.1 This report establishes a position that park and ride should be made available for people who cannot feasibly access rail and rapid transit by non-car means. Specifically, TfWM aims to:

- Reduce the proportion of users who drive short distances (less than 1 mile) to use park and ride; and
- Reduce the need for users to arrive very early in order to secure a space.

11.2 The former aim will increase the availability of park and ride for those who live too far from their nearest rail and/or rapid transit station/stop to walk or cycle, these people live in areas of poor public transport connectivity. The latter aim will ensure that park and ride can be used by those who may have commitments such as family or caring responsibilities that currently prevent them from arriving at park and ride early enough to secure a space.

11.3 Park and ride is not a measure that directly increases access to rail and rapid transit services for deprived households. However, the site by site review and development framework for new provision will provide for the identification of whether lower income users for whom the introduction of parking charges (or lack of ability to avoid parking charges at other rail stations or sites) will be particularly impactful. A full equalities impact assessment would be undertaken on any final proposals.

## **12.0 Geographical Area of Report's Implications**

12.1 Within the strategy, park and ride is considered as a means to access the rail and rapid transit network. At present, the major reason identified by users for using park and ride is to access employment. The WMCA sits at the centre of a very broad travel to work area as defined by commuters using rail to access employment<sup>1</sup>. This represents the broadest possible geography over which TfWM will work with partners to influence access to rail and rapid transit (including park and ride) to ensure that residents across the region can access opportunities in the WMCA area.

## **13.0 Other Implications**

13.1 None.

## **14.0 Schedule of Background Papers**

14.1 None.

## **15.0 Appendices**

15.1 None.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ons.maps.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?layers=1c28f4bf7b2b45fdb1329dd9e060205>