A summary of the Area Strategy Guidance Tool
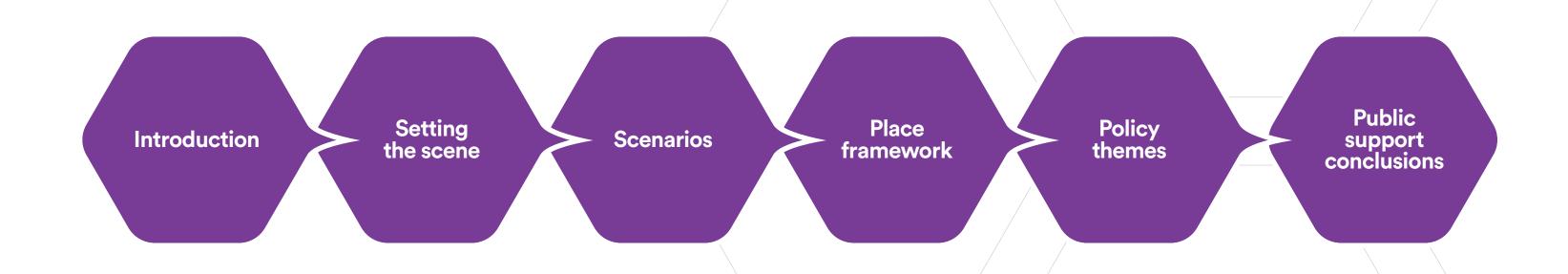
Transport for West Midlands

Introduction

This document is a summary of the Reimagining Transport in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Area Strategy Guidance Tool.

The guidance tool has been written to help West Midlands transport professionals work collectively from a common evidence base. This will help promote and co-ordinate policies which support the Local Transport Plan at a strategic and local level.

This summary document provides a high-level overview of the full Guidance document, highlighting the key stages of the step-by-step guide.

The structure of this document is outlined in the following figure…

Introduction → Setting the scene → Scenarios → Place framework → Policy themes → Public support conclusions

Setting The Scene

The LTP Core Strategy sets out how we will make progress against the 5 Motives for Change. At the heart of this LTP is a need to deliver behaviour change – local and national analysis suggests that in order to achieve the rapid decarbonisation needed to meet climate change targets but also to create a more equitable transport system that works for everyone, significant behaviour change is needed.

The West Midlands is already delivering some significant improvements to the transport system. But as the LTP Green Paper explains our, current strategy won't be enough to enable us to make changes of the scale and pace required.

This guidance and tool will help us to navigate challenges and develop the most appropriate approaches that work for the different people and places of the West Midlands. It will help us develop a common understanding of existing issues and constraints, the sorts of policies and measures that might be effective and appropriate and understand their impacts to help us continue to review and improve our approach. In particular it will help us to ensure we consider how people feel about how we might change the transport system.

Why change?

- Sustaining economic success
- Creating a fairer society
- Supporting local communities and places
- Becoming more active
- Tackling the climate emergency

To achieve this we need to...

- Improve accessibility
- Reduce traffic
- Electrify transport

Avoid — **Avoiding travel** - for example by accessing services online and consolidating trips we make;

Shift — **Shifting travel** - to places that are more accessible by sustainable modes of transport, such as cycling, walking or public transport and travelling by those modes; and
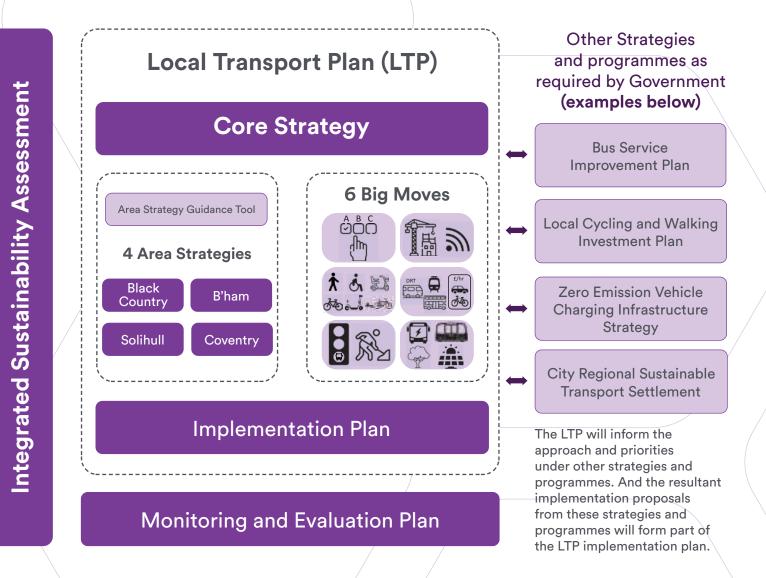
Improve — **Improve travel** - by designing out emissions and other impacts from the vehicles we use and tailoring their use, for example by adopting zero emission vehicles (such as electric/hydrogen vehicles).

Setting The Scene

The West Midlands LTP will include a number of component documents as set out in this diagram.

The Core Strategy sets out that we will develop four Area Strategies to help us with a strong and robust regional approach to tackling our shared challenges. This Area Strategy Guidance sets out a consistent approach to developing the four Area Strategies.

The Area Strategies will focus on the planning of measures across our neighbourhoods, centres and corridors. The Big Moves and Area Strategies will be developed in tandem. The Area Strategies will be particularly important for resolving how measures across the 6 Big Moves will be delivered alongside each other in particular places, and for accounting for the land use and development proposals within Local Development Plans.

Integrated Sustainability Assessment

Local Transport Plan (LTP)

Core Strategy

Area Strategy Guidance Tool

4 Area Strategies

Black Country | B'ham

Solihull | Coventry

6 Big Moves

Implementation Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Other Strategies and programmes as required by Government (examples below)

Bus Service Improvement Plan

Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan

Zero Emission Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy

City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement

The LTP will inform the approach and priorities under other strategies and programmes. And the resultant implementation proposals from these strategies and programmes will form part of the LTP implementation plan.

Setting The Scene

We need a consistent regional approach that provides long-term stability and aligns with DfT's LTP Guidance. A strategy that provides TfWM, local authorities and partners a starting place from which to develop the most effective localised approaches to the collective challenges that the region faces.

Challenges

Prevailing policy approaches
There is uncertainty around funding and consensus to manage demand (within and beyond our borders)

Place
Delivering the motives for change requires a tailored strategy to enable place-specific solutions. Our traditional approach has not had a place focus on what works where.
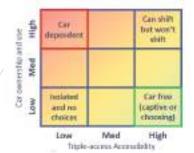
Public attitudes
There is uncertainty around the public's ability and willingness to accept change

Techniques to address challenges

Scenarios
Within Local Control   Bold

Place framework

Public attitudes

How it helps

Technical assessment
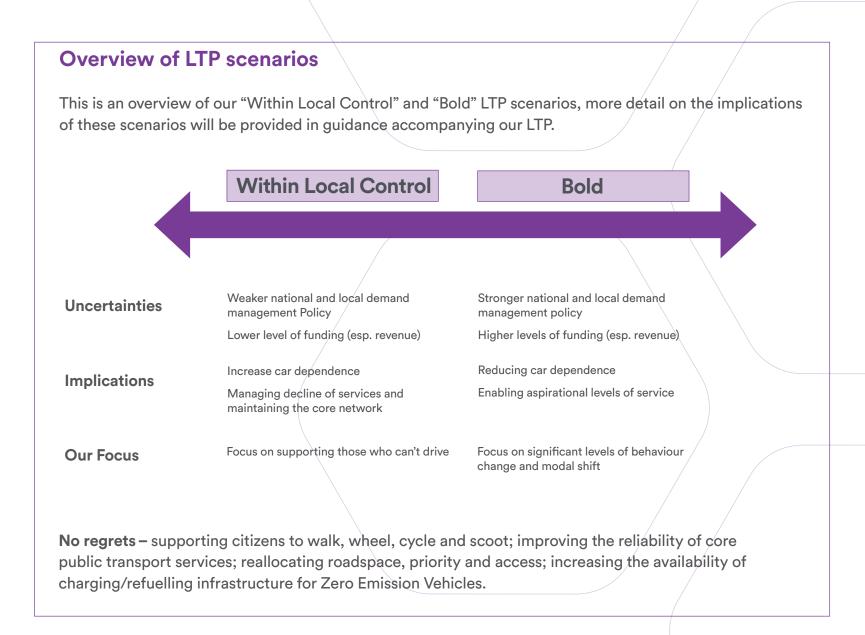Identifies the good ideas that are viable and effective in delivering LTP goals

Public support
Helps us understand which bits of strategy are easier/harder – helps us with tactics
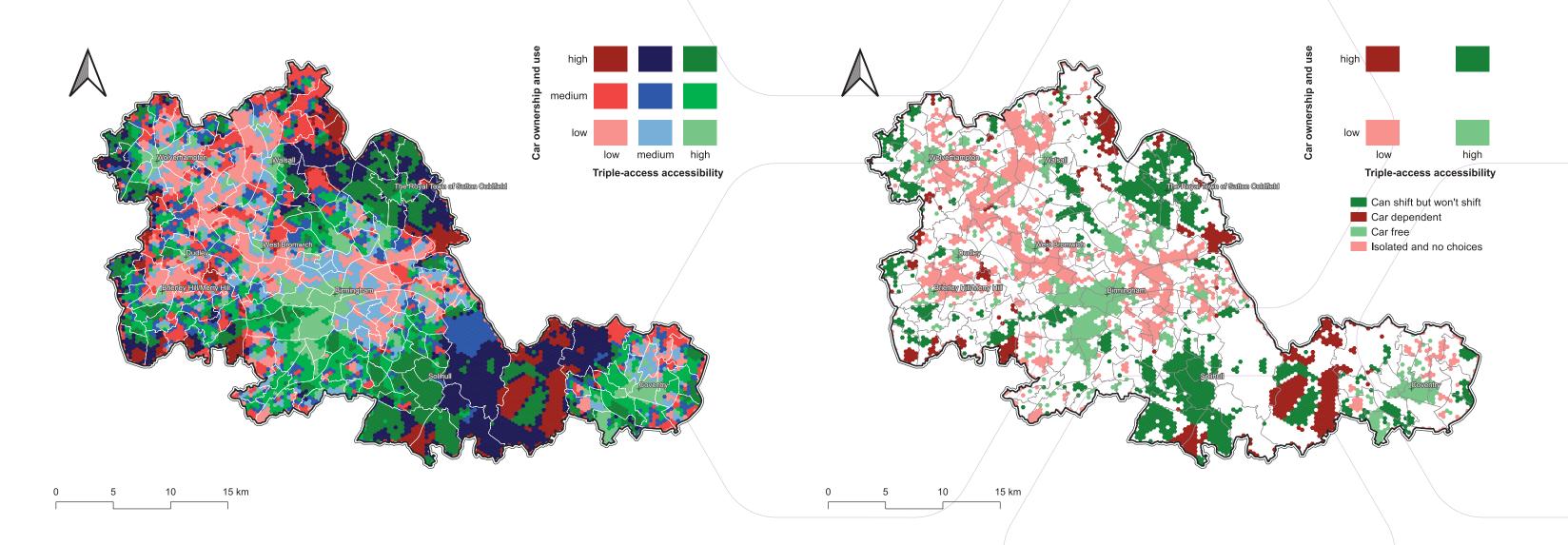
Guidance Tool

Scenarios

It is impossible to plan for every plausible future considering every plausible uncertainty, therefore we have focused on two extreme scenarios ("Within Local Control" and "Bold") set around particular uncertainties that we considered would fundamentally affect the strategic context for intervention.

Overview of LTP scenarios

This is an overview of our "Within Local Control" and "Bold" LTP scenarios, more detail on the implications of these scenarios will be provided in guidance accompanying our LTP.

	Within Local Control	**Bold**
Uncertainties	Weaker national and local demand management Policy	Stronger national and local demand management policy
	Lower level of funding (esp. revenue)	Higher levels of funding (esp. revenue)
Implications	Increase car dependence	Reducing car dependence
	Managing decline of services and maintaining the core network	Enabling aspirational levels of service
Our Focus	Focus on supporting those who can't drive	Focus on significant levels of behaviour change and modal shift

No regrets – supporting citizens to walk, wheel, cycle and scoot; improving the reliability of core public transport services; reallocating roadspace, priority and access; increasing the availability of charging/refuelling infrastructure for Zero Emission Vehicles.
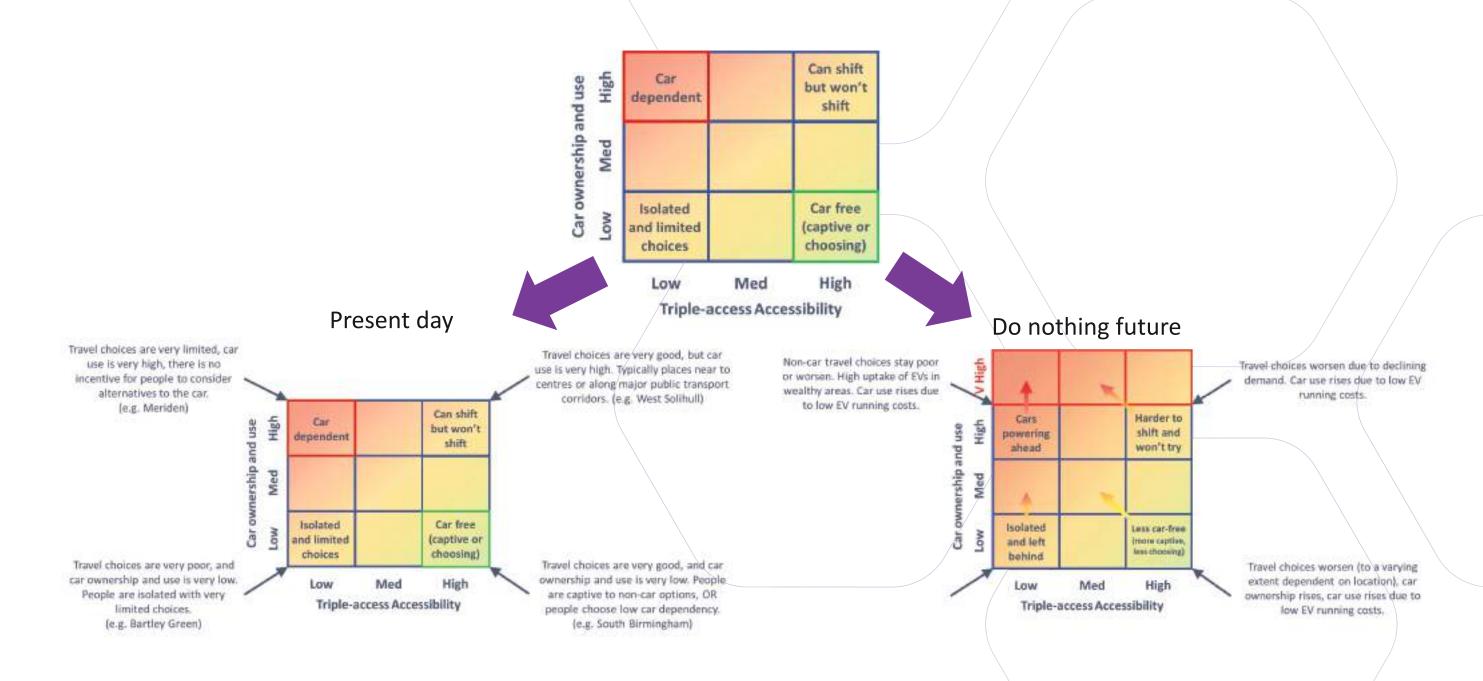
Place Framework

Using triple-access accessibility and car ownership and use, we categorised all places in the West Midlands as falling into 9 "bins" in a 3 X 3 matrix, describing relative access and car ownership and use. We have initially focused on the four extreme corners of the matrix to enable officers to apply critical thinking to how the key place (accessibility) and people (car ownership and use) factors would result in differences in how transport needs and options might evolve in different scenarios and places.

Place Framework

We considered:
- General present day behaviours, available options and challenges,
- How places in the four corners might change if we take no action over the next 10-20 years,
- What local policy driven changes could be viable and effective under our "Within Local control" and "Bold" scenarios to best achieve LTP aims.

Present day

Do nothing future

"Within Local Control" Future | "Bold" Future

Limited improvements to non-car travel choices. Public transport continues to struggle to compete, with service withdrawals (or replacement with DRT). High uptake of EVs in wealthy areas. Potential increase in car use, despite increased home-working.
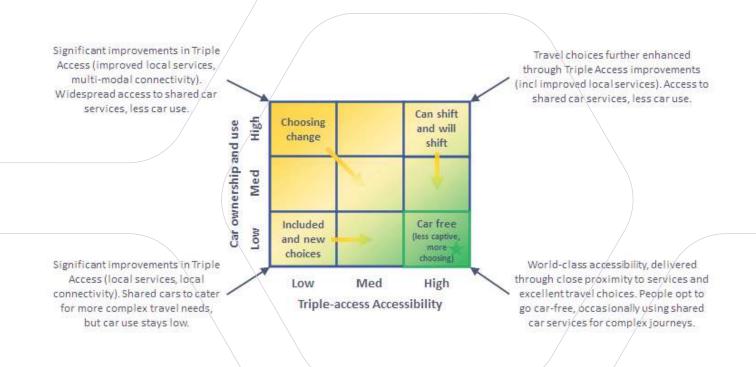
Some attempts made to encourage mode shift but swimming against the tide of a declining PT network. Service withdrawals (or some replacement with DRT). Introduction of micromobility and active travel improvements help to mitigate. This helps to mitigate rise in car use.

Improvements to active travel, micromobility and public transport (incl DRT, concessionary fares) to improve accessibility and inclusion. Car use starts to rise amongst some, although relatively modest due to costs of use and availability of alternatives.

Strong focus on improving active travel and introduction of micromobility. Public transport viability remains relatively strong, enabled by bus priority, mobility hubs and MaaS. But market dynamics could mean that there is some increase in car use in some communities.

Significant improvements in Triple Access (improved local services, multi-modal connectivity). Widespread access to shared car services, less car use.

Travel choices further enhanced through Triple Access improvements (incl improved local services). Access to shared car services, less car use.

Significant improvements in Triple Access (local services, local connectivity). Shared cars to cater for more complex travel needs, but car use stays low.

World-class accessibility, delivered through close proximity to services and excellent travel choices. People opt to go car-free, occasionally using shared car services for complex journeys.

Focus on doing the best we can for those who are unable to drive against a backdrop of declining levels of services such as public transport.

Focus on rapidly restructuring our transport system to accommodate behavioural shifts away from car use, aided by improved levels of demand for sustainable use of land and services such as PT and shared services.

On the next page we explain the implications of this for what policies can be pursued with no regrets, as opposed to those policies where we need to think more carefully because their future viability is impacted by what future we are in.

NO REGRETS

Policies that we can be more certain of pursuing in either scenario include:
- **Promoting accessible land use developments*** – development in places that can be accessed without a car and designed to enable non-car mobility and integration into wider area.
- **Supporting access via digital connectivity*** – supporting infrastructure, skills, and inclusively designed digital transport services
- **Supporting cycle and scoot** – enabling inclusive design and regulation of powered vehicles, enforcing rules, delivering education, and greater delivery of our cycle/scoot network.
- <u>Reliable core</u> **fixed PT** – our core network will weather uncertainty better than other services, we can deliver priority measures to enhance its reliability.
- **Walking and wheeling** - ensure footways/paths remain clear of obstacles, to provide safe crossing points, and to support pedestrian zones in some of our busiest high streets and centres.
- **Managing demand: reallocating space, access, and priority** – to support reliable core PT, walking and wheeling, and cycling and scooting, we will need to change how we use the space available for transport to create coherent, safe, convenient and reliable networks for these modes.
- **Electrifying transport: ZEV charging/refuelling** – whatever the future looks like, we need to reduce our use of ICE vehicles and this means we need sufficient charging/refuelling infrastructure. Care needs to be taken to strike a balance with overprovision of infrastructure as ZEV range improves and to avoid clutter that disrupts non-car travel.

* These policies are viable in both scenarios but the extent of their impacts will be much more limited in the "Within Local Control" scenario, with a lack of wider market drivers to encourage more sustainable land uses, and digital connectivity modifying but not necessarily reducing overall travel.
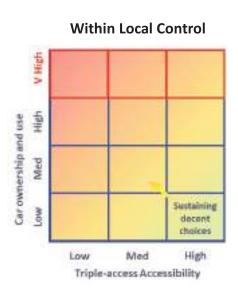
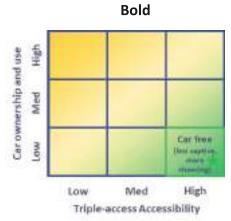**THINK CAREFULLY**

Policies which deviate more significantly depending on scenario include:

Policy theme	Within Local Control	Bold
Fixed PT	With lower overall demand and subsidy for services we may find levels of service deteriorate, particularly away from the core network and there is more limited opportunity to upgrade to more operationally expensive rail and rapid transit services.	With higher levels of demand and subsidy, the overall levels of service (connectivity, frequency, hours of operation, coverage) for fixed public transport are likely to improve. Bolstering the core network (and with higher demands enabling wider upgrades to rail/rapid transit connectivity) and strengthening local bus services too, helping to connect isolated people in isolated communities to opportunity.
Dynamic PT	Dynamic PT may play a greater role where fixed PT services cannot be sustained, helping to maintain accessibility by shifting how we deliver services and subsidise transport.	The need for DRT to replace fixed services will diminish as fixed services strengthen in a bold future, but with additional subsidy and demands, it may also be viable for DRT to play a wider role in servicing some of the more disparate demands that fixed PT may be unable to cater for.
Shared services (car clubs and bike/scooter hire)	Like public transport, these services require paying customers and/or subsidy to survive. In a "Within Local Control" scenario, the extent of coverage of these services may be more limited. The viability of bike/scooter hire is likely to be stronger where car ownership/use is low and in busy centres. Car clubs may face more significant challenges with viability.	Higher levels of demand and subsidy will enable us to improve the availability of shared services across the West Midlands. With more people using fixed and dynamic public transport services, cycle and scooter hire may help last mile connections across the West Midlands. With people shifting away from car ownership by reducing their cars per household or going carless, the demand for car clubs will also improve.
Managing demand: parking controls and pricing	Without the wider consensus within our region and beyond to drive behaviour changes that help change how we use land and improve the availability of services to improve access, very localised hard constraints on parking and application of charges will face issues of equity. We need to think carefully about how we implement such policies to avoid unintended consequences.	With wider behavioural shifts and with the resultant improvements in accessibility (as land uses and services improve) the use of parking controls and pricing will become more equitable in more of the West Midlands. These will be key local measures helping in the wider efforts of our neighbours and nationally to manage demand to travel.

Car Free

No regrets	🟩
Most effective in bold	🟧
Bold only	🟥
Not relevant	⬜

Within Local Control

Bold

Policy themes	Car free
Changing land use	🟧
Digital alternatives	🟧
Walking & wheeling	🟩
Cycling & scooting	🟩
Delivering a fixed PT network	🟩
Delivering a dynamic PT network	⬜
Shared services – bike and scooter	🟩
Shared services – car clubs	⬜
Electrified transport: EV charging	🟩
Managing demand: reallocating road space	🟩
Managing demand: parking controls	🟩
Managing demand: pricing measures	🟥

Key challenges: Whilst car ownership and use are relatively low, car ownership and use is still evident (with prevalent on-street parking). There are also challenges that traffic poses to walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting.
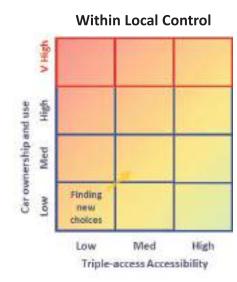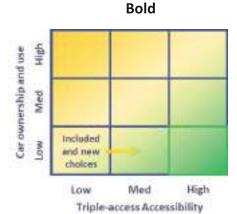
No regrets policy themes:
- Walking and wheeling
- Cycling and scooting
- Delivering a fixed PT network
- Shared services – bike and scooter
- Electrified transport – EV charging
- Managing demand – reallocating road space
- Managing demand – parking controls

Think carefully policy themes:
- Changing land use
- Digital alternatives
- Managing demand: pricing measures

Isolated and Limited Choices

No regrets	🟩
Most effective in bold	🟧
Bold only	🟥
Not relevant	⬜

Within Local Control

Bold

Policy themes	Isolated
Changing land use	🟧
Digital alternatives	🟧
Walking & wheeling	🟩
Cycling & scooting	🟩
Delivering a fixed PT network	🟥
Delivering a dynamic PT network	🟩
Shared services – bike and scooter	🟩
Shared services – car clubs	🟥
Electrified transport: EV charging	🟩
Managing demand: reallocating road space	🟩
Managing demand: parking controls	🟩
Managing demand: pricing measures	

Key challenges: People suffer high levels of transport-related social exclusion due to the poor transport options and relatively low levels of access to cars to make journeys.
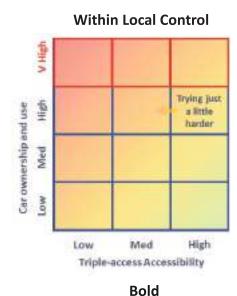
No regrets policy themes:
- Walking and wheeling
- Cycling and scooting
- Delivering a dynamic PT network
- Shared Services – bike and scooter
- Electrified transport: EV charging
- Managing demand: reallocating road space
- Managing demand – parking controls

Think carefully policy themes:
- Changing land use
- Digital alternatives
- Delivering a fixed PT network
- Shared services – car clubs

Can Shift Won't Shift

No regrets	🟩
Most effective in bold	🟨
Bold only	🟥
Not relevant	⬜

Within Local Control

Bold

Policy themes	Can shift
Changing land use	🟨
Digital alternatives	🟨
Walking & wheeling	🟩
Cycling & scooting	🟩
Delivering a fixed PT network	🟥
Delivering a dynamic PT network	🟥
Shared services – bike and scooter	🟥
Shared services – car clubs	🟥
Electrified transport: EV charging	🟩
Managing demand: reallocating road space	🟩
Managing demand: parking controls	🟥
Managing demand: pricing measures	🟥

Key challenges: There is potential for car ownership to increase even further. In particular, there is likely to be a greater uptake of EVs in these areas.

No regrets policy themes:
- Cycling and Scooting
- Walking and Wheeling
- Electrified Transport – EV Charging
- Managing demand – Reallocating road space

Think carefully policy themes:
- Changing land use
- Digital alternatives
- Delivering a fixed PT network
- Delivering a dynamic PT network
- Shared services – bike and scooter
- Shared services – car clubs
- Managing demand: parking controls
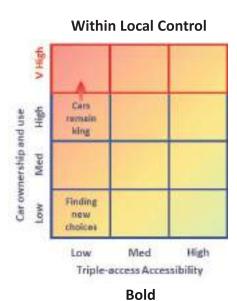- Managing demand: pricing measures

Car Dependent

Within Local Control

Bold

Policy themes	Car dependent
Changing land use	🟧
Digital alternatives	🟧
Walking & wheeling	⬜
Cycling & scooting	🟩
Delivering a fixed PT network	🟥
Delivering a dynamic PT network	🟩
Shared services – bike and scooter	🟥
Shared services – car clubs	⬜
Electrified transport: EV charging	🟩
Managing demand: reallocating road space	🟩
Managing demand: parking controls	🟥
Managing demand: pricing measures	🟥

Key challenges: There is potential for car ownership to increase even further. In particular, there is likely to be a greater uptake of EVs in these areas. Furthermore, existing bus services may deteriorate to the point where they offer limited practical value (along with the already limited local amenities).

No regrets policy themes:
- Cycling and scooting
- Delivering a Dynamic PT Network
- Electrified transport: EV charging
- Managing demand: reallocating road space

Think carefully policy themes:
- Changing land use
- Digital alternatives
- Delivering a fixed PT network
- Shared services – bike and scooter
- Managing demand: parking controls
- Managing demand: pricing measures

Policy Themes Summary

Twelve policy themes aligned with the 6 Big Moves have been identified to deliver the primary outcomes of 'Improve Accessibility', 'Reduce Traffic' and 'Electrify Transport'. We have outlined key considerations under each policy theme in relation to 'no regrets' and 'think carefully'.

Land use

No regrets
Land use policies to encourage accessible mixed use permeable denser development are a no regrets action, but success may be limited in the "Within Local Control" scenario.

Think carefully
Changing land uses to improve spatial proximity is outside of TfWM's control and requires close working with the planning authorities. In addition, interventions such as car free developments may backfire if not done in the right place; there are many examples of "car-free developments" resulting in car dependency and/or littered with nuisance parking.

Digital alternatives

No regrets
Delivering programmes to enhance digital infrastructure, skills and access to hardware (targeting those who need support) are generally no regrets, as long as people aren't left behind.

Think carefully
Improving digital connectivity is outside of TfWM's control and requires close working with external parties to achieve digital delivery or digital upskilling. Digital alternatives can't be relied upon to reduce traffic; they improve accessibility.

Walking and wheeling

No regrets
Keeping pavements clear, routes well lit and maintained, and addressing severance issues are generally no regrets (albeit with less case in car dependent places in the "Within Local Control").

Think carefully
Breaking of impermeable street layouts and installing infrastructure where there currently is nothing requires substantial resource, the case for which is likely to be higher in the bold scenario.
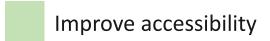Ensuring natural surveillance and lighting is critical.

Cycling and scooting

No regrets
Segregated routes and quiet streets for cycling and scooting is critical both in the context of declining PT under the "Within Local Control", and in the context of reduced car ownership in the bold (esp in car oriented urban environments). Policies to help people with limited space store vehicles securely are also no-regrets.

Think carefully
Cycle/scoot infrastructure needs to be delivered so as to enable a range of vehicles for a range of users to be used.

Natural surveillance and lighting are critical – isolated green/blue routes through parks and canals may be a poor investment.

We should get infrastructure right the first time. We need to build aspirationally even in the "Within Local Control".

Delivering a fixed PT network

No regrets
Bus priority measures on the core network may be important in both scenarios.

Think carefully
Delivering significant rail and light rail improvements may be unsustainable in the "Within Local Control" scenario, and may represent a substantial opportunity cost where other policies can better support access.

Delivering a dynamic PT network

No regrets
The role of and case for DRT in providing connectivity where accessibility is poor (and deteriorating) should be explored and the need for alternatives for those who struggle to use other alternatives to the car will continue.

Think carefully
The wider case for DRT may be limited. Careful comparisons are needed between the role of DRT and fixed PT.

Improve accessibility   Reduce traffic   Electrify transport

Policy Themes Summary

Bike and scooter hire

No regrets
In areas of high demand for those who cannot afford their own vehicle (or find it difficult to perhaps owing to a lack of space) with limited alternatives, and around popular public transport destinations, there may be a more sustainable case for shared scooter/bike hire.

Think carefully
A scatter gun approach is not recommended for these shared services – thought needs to be given in particular to how the ability to own a powered cycle/scoot mode might alter demand.

Car clubs

No regrets
Installing some car club bays where it is understood that there may be commercial demand (likely to be limited locations) is a no-regrets action and may help complement wider policies to manage parking/kerbside controls.

Think carefully
Overall, the priority for car clubs is unlikely to be very high, don't look to these to play a substantial role in facilitating access; they are a complimentary measure to be considered when other priorities are addressed.

EV charging

No regrets
Focus on introducing infrastructure where households and businesses are unlikely to be able to provide for their own, and some limited hubs at key points on the KRN.

Keep infrastructure for walk, wheel, cycle and scoot clear of obstruction – sacrifice space for parking instead.

Think carefully
Overprovision of charging may risk redundancy in future and encouraging car lock-in.

Reallocate road space

No regrets
Across both the bold and the "Within Local Control", reallocation of roadspace and related access controls are our greatest tools to deliver LTP aims.
If we aren't prepared to reduce accessibility for general traffic to cater for sustainable travel, then we will marginalise those who are unable to drive in the pragmatic and will not provide the capacity needed to enable shifting behaviours in the bold.

Think carefully
Limit don't eliminate access for lower priority road users (with limited exceptions).

Parking controls

No regrets
Limiting supply in otherwise accessible centres is sensible.
Keeping main corridors unobstructed.
Restraining on-street parking where off-street provision exists.
Managing on-street parking where off-street provision is absent.

Think carefully
Removing parking supply altogether and severely constraining it outside of our most accessible locations may not be practical and will likely be ignored.
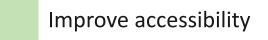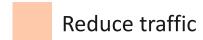
Pricing measures

No regrets
Setting parking charges to encourage sustainable access where it is stronger.

Think carefully
Strong localised pricing measures risk marginalising groups and discouraging access where applied without alternatives.

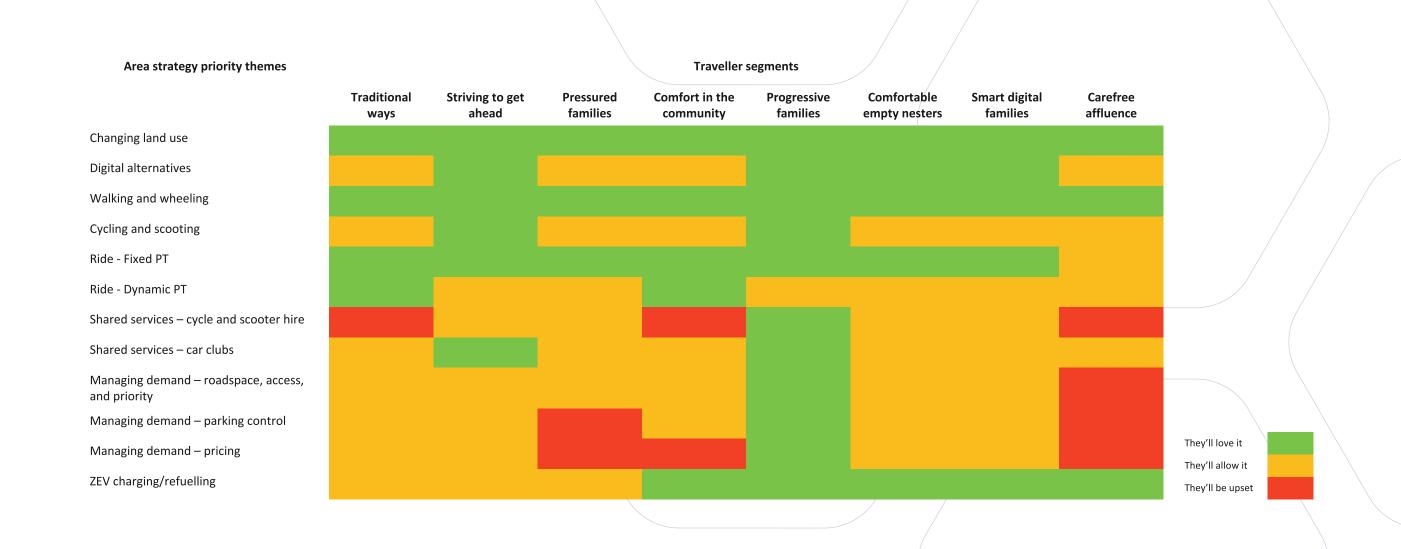■ Improve accessibility   ■ Reduce traffic   ■ Electrify transport

Public Support

The West Midlands is made up of a range of different people who have different motivations and attitudes towards travel. To simplify our assessment of public support, we used TfWM's 8 traveller segments. Our assessment of acceptability of progress under policy themes was based on assessment of the travel needs, attitudes and desires of the different segments described. We identified that what people support and what has been identified as viable and effective interventions don't always align. This will require local tactics to be identified to overcome these barriers.

Area strategy priority themes

Traveller segments

Area strategy priority themes	Traditional ways	Striving to get ahead	Pressured families	Comfort in the community	Progressive families	Comfortable empty nesters	Smart digital families	Carefree affluence
Changing land use								
Digital alternatives								
Walking and wheeling								
Cycling and scooting								
Ride - Fixed PT								
Ride - Dynamic PT								
Shared services – cycle and scooter hire								
Shared services – car clubs								
Managing demand – roadspace, access, and priority								
Managing demand – parking control								
Managing demand – pricing								
ZEV charging/refuelling								

Legend:
- They'll love it (green)
- They'll allow it (orange)
- They'll be upset (red)

Conclusions

We have identified a series of 'no regrets' policy themes, where we are confident that underlying interventions would be viable and effective in both "Within Local Control" and "Bold" scenarios and in all place types:

- Walking and wheeling

- Cycling and scooting

- Electrified transport: EV charging

- Managing demand: reallocating roadspace

- Changing land use
  (viable but more effective in "Bold")

- Digital alternatives
  (viable but more effective in "Bold")

We have also identified 'think carefully' policy themes, where we are less confident that underlying interventions would be viable and effective in all place types and across both scenarios:

- Delivering a dynamic PT network

- Shared Services – bike and scooter

- Managing demand – parking controls and pricing

- Delivering a fixed PT network

- Shared services – car clubs

We are aware that the public acceptability assessment that we have presented in this Area Strategy Guidance Tool is based on officer understanding of population segments and therefore requires validation and refinement through public engagement. We will work with the public to help them understand where decisions can have most impact.

Our next step in the LTP process will be to use the Guidance Tool to develop area strategies for the four West Midlands Authority areas. For each Area Strategy we will work collaboratively through the guidance by focusing on the tactics and the changes needed to affect future policy and deliver impact on the ground.

A consistent approach for Area Strategy development will deliver a number of benefits for the West Midlands which should help to secure future funding and leave the area on the 'front foot' for when LTP guidance is published by the DfT.

Next Steps

For each Area Strategy we propose to work with each local authority to...

Develop and confirm goals

Monitoring & Evaluation

Review the place categorisations

→ Discuss and agree the place types within your area

→ Discuss the scenarios & policy themes; what works where?

→ Identify the "Within Local Control" & "Bold" interventions but critically the 'no regret' policy themes

Develop the draft Area Strategies - informs local strategy and programmes

← Consider existing proposals & strategies; how do they align?

← Identify tactics for successful delivery (including viable bold interventions)

← Look at the 'no regrets' through the lens of public acceptability

Transport for
West Midlands