

Planning Guidelines: Local Area Plans 2013

This guidance document and its companion guide, the *Manual for Local Area Plans (2013)*, was published by the Department of the Environment in June 2013.

The LAP guidelines set out the range of requirements for the making of LAPs, including their content. Many of these requirements are concerned with placemaking and the design of streets and street networks, including:

'improving the public domain by providing active frontage to all public spaces and routes, thus promoting streets which encourage pedestrian activity and are safer by benefiting from passive surveillance'.

'providing compact, walkable neighbourhoods incorporating a variety of house types with mixed tenure'.

'designing in active streets and designing out anti-social behaviour through urban masterplanning, encouraging good mixture of uses and adaptability of buildings'.

'measures to encourage local people to adopt healthier, smarter ways to travel around their local communities, especially walking and cycling'

'pedestrians, cyclists and users of other modes of transport that involve physical activity are given the highest priority in transport and mobility strategies, policies and objectives'

The *Manual for Local Area Plans* provides more detailed measures to achieve these goals. In relation to street design, this includes:

'Create or enhance a distinctive hierarchy of streets, spaces and landscapes within an integrated structure'.

'Ensure priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport'.

'Set out the nature and hierarchies of public transport'.

'Optimise areas of high accessibility to public transport in terms of density and intensity of use'.

'Promote shared, safe movement routes for all users and avoid duplication or separation of main movement routes'.

'Set out the general movement function of routes and spaces within the route hierarchy'.

1.3 Application of this Manual

The principles, approaches and standards set out in this Manual apply to the design of all urban roads and streets (that is streets and roads with a speed limit of 60 km/h or less), except:

- (a) Motorways.
- (b) In exceptional circumstances, certain urban roads and streets with the written consent of Sanctioning Authorities.²

This Manual cannot account for every scenario (particularly when retrofitting existing streets) that a designer may face, the application of principles, approaches and standards contained herein requires a degree of flexibility. This is provided to designers, within a limited framework, via the use of the following terminology:

For the purposes of this Manual:

- **'Shall' or 'must'** indicates that a particular requirement is mandatory;
- **'Should'** indicates a recommendation. Where designers fail to meet a recommendation, they must clearly document the reasons as to why and propose a series of mitigation or compensation measures.
- **'May'** indicates a clarification, option or alternative course of action.

The Manual introduces a set of principles, approaches and standards necessary to achieve best practice in urban roads and street design. Implementation of the principles approaches and standards will be achieved through actions at national and local level.

At the national level:

1. The Department of Transport Tourism and Sport (DTTS) and the Department Environment, Community and Local Government (DECLG) introduced this Manual as a key step in implementing the policies on promoting the use of more sustainable transportation proposed in *Smarter Travel* (2009) and the policies on sustainable living contained in the *Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* (2009).
2. DTTS and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG, formerly Department of Environment, Community and Local Government) will work with local authorities in assisting with technical aspects of the implementation of the Manual on an on-going basis, learning from experience within Ireland and internationally.

At city and county level:

1. Local authorities shall facilitate the implementation of the principles, approaches and standards to road and street design set out in the Manual in carrying out their development planning functions under the Planning Code.
2. City and County development plans shall reference this Manual in order to facilitate the implementation of the policies for sustainable living contained in the *Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* (2009). Local Area Plans and also other non-statutory plans should also reference the principles, approaches and standards within this Manual, where appropriate.

² Sanctioning Authorities include:

- (i) Transport Infrastructure Ireland in respect of urban national roads. TII shall consult with the NTA in respect of such roads which lie within the Greater Dublin Area
- (ii) The National Transport Authority in respect of urban non-national roads within the Greater Dublin Area.
- (iii) The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in respect of urban non-national roads.