Homes England

The Housing and Regeneration Agency



Sustainable Placemaking Guidance

Delivering Quality: Mobility Hubs

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Document owner	Homes England Sustainability and Design Team
Document author	Błażej Czuba, Conor Moloney (Maccreanor Lavington) Matt McFeat (PJA)
Contributors	Jon Sandford, Amy Burbidge, Garry Hall
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Figure 1: Cover Page: Great Kneighton, Cambridge
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Contents

Understanding mobility hubs 5

Definition of mobility hubs 5
Role in transport networks 5
Benefits of mobility hubs 6
Functional success factors 7

Types and components of mobility hubs 8

Components of mobility hubs 8
Types of mobility hubs 8

Planning for mobility hubs 10

Place outcomes 10
Stakeholders 10
Project brief considerations 10
Location criteria 11
Decision making 11
Service integration 11

Delivery approaches for mobility hubs 12

Procurement models 12
Operating model 12
Funding models 12
Managing risk 13
Delivering successfully 13

Foreword

Mobility Hubs are a user-centred approach to urban transport and the configuration of infrastructure, buildings and public space. Homes England promotes their integration into development as a way to support active travel, shared transport, public transport and placemaking.

This document introduces the concept and purpose of a mobility hub, and outlines the process through which one can be planned and delivered. It provides a toolkit to inform the specification of mobility hubs, and signposts readers to further resources. The document is informed by the review of existing literature on mobility hubs, including documents from Arup, CoMoUK, Oxfordshire County Council and Transport Scotland. It summarises results from a structured workshop with Local Planning Authority representatives, advocacy groups, and consultants from the Homes England DARTS Panel. There were 20 participants from across the country.

Understanding mobility hubs

Definition of mobility hubs

A mobility hub is a place that brings together active travel, shared transport and public transport services, It provides amenities to support a low carbon society and is designed to improve the public realm for all. It differs from a conventional transport interchange because it includes shared mobility, and integrates non-transport components such as community facilities and placemaking elements.

Role in transport networks

Mobility hubs have an important role to play for users in making it easier to access shared and public transport, transfer between different transport modes, and plan integrated journeys. They can help avoid and reduce the need for motorized travel, shift to more environmentally friendly modes, and improve the energy efficiency of transport modes.

Mobility hubs aren't just about access to transport, they are also about provision of local facilities and services. This means people don't need to travel as much, and rely on their local neighbourhoods more.

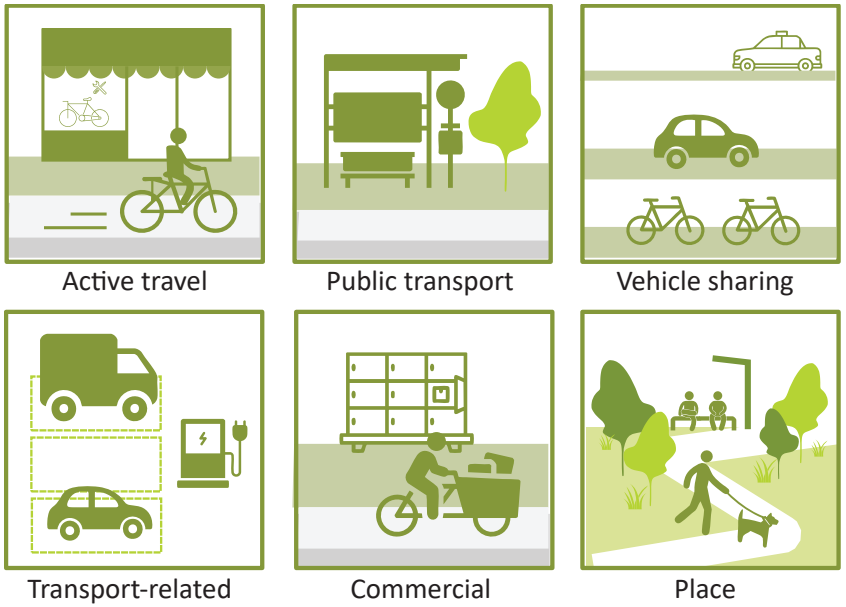


Figure 2: The components of mobility hubs

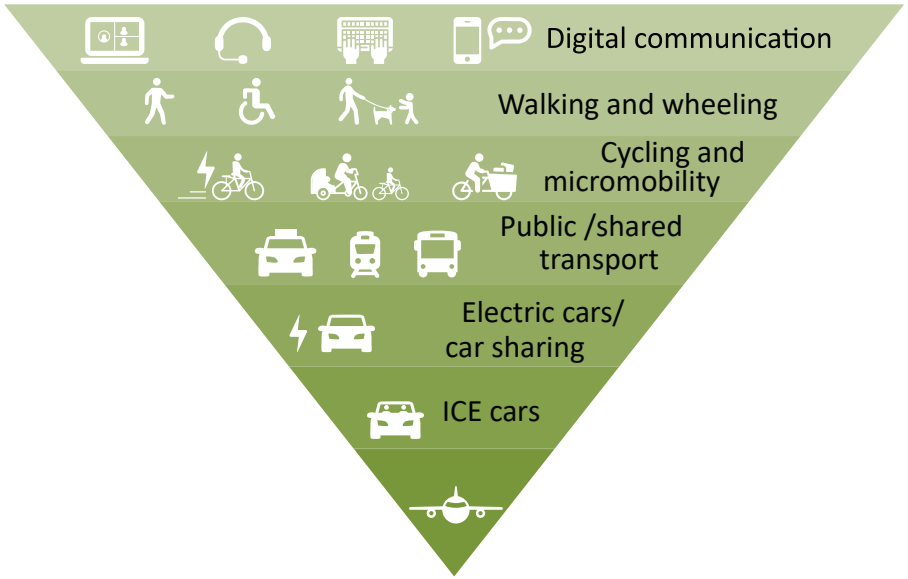


Figure 3: Sustainable travel hierarchy - inspired by work of Energy Savings Trust (2024)

Benefits of mobility hubs

Mobility hubs can play an important role in delivering the 'vision-led' transport planning requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework. As part of an integrated transport system, they provide social, economic and environmental benefits, and help create a sustainable place to live.

Delivering savings to users



Reduced car use and ownership can provide direct cost savings to users.

Making travel options more visible



Mobility hubs can improve the visibility and raise the profile of shared mobility and public transport options.

Reducing carbon emissions



Modal shift to sustainable transport modes can reduce carbon emissions.

Contributing to better public health



Increased uptake of active travel can contribute to better public health.

Reducing congestion and pollution



Fewer car journeys can lead to better air quality and less congestion.

Supporting social interaction



High-quality public realm and community spaces can support positive social interaction.

Making transfers easier



Easier transfers between different transport modes can improve the convenience and attractiveness of shared mobility and public transport options.

Enabling higher density



Lower levels of car ownership can support higher density development with a smaller land-take for car parking.

Functional success factors

A mobility hub should support people on the move, whatever their lifestyle. For it to form an integral part of the journey, it is important to consider what happens before, during and after visiting it. Thinking this way focuses more on what a mobility hub does, than what it is.



Reliable real-time data from home

People should have real-time information on a particular bus journey, interchange options, or the availability of charged e-bikes.

Direct, safe, pleasant route to the hub

The route to the hub should be direct and the hub reasonably close, for example within 800m/10 minutes' walk of people's homes. There should be good natural surveillance, and the route should be legible with safe crossings, high quality of public realm, compact urban form, and good lighting.

Choice of transport modes

The hub should provide multiple mobility options including active travel, micromobility, such as cycles or scooters, vehicle sharing and public transport services. The hub can also facilitate access to bike repair, or taxi services.

Comfortable and welcoming place

The hub should provide shelter from the weather and seating with a clear view of hub amenities and services. There should also be good natural surveillance and lighting, and the hub's components and materials should be robust, and of a high quality.

Supporting amenities

A range of hub services and amenities should enable people to make the most of the time they spend there. This can include infrastructure such as wifi access and charging facilities for their devices, and open space amenities such as play and exercise equipment, or a parklet. A hub could also include commercial services such as a kiosk, café, or package delivery lockers which might make it a destination in its own right. It could also be co-located with other amenities such as a co-working space, school or shopping centre. E-vehicle charging could should be incorporated.

Types and components of mobility hubs

Components of mobility hubs

There is no one-size-fits-all template for mobility hubs, and their components will depend on site-specific factors. Components on this page provide an indication of what should be considered at planning stage.

Types of mobility hubs

The programmatic elements of a mobility hub should be closely related to its urban context and its infrastructure network. As a general principle, the more transport interchanges it enables, the greater the range of other components it should provide. Elements can include transport-related components to support cycling and journey planning, as well as place components to appeal to people waiting and support their lifestyles. Depending on the context and footfall at the hub, it may also be viable to provide a range of commercial services on an occasional regular or permanent basis. An extended list of mobility hub components is set out at the end of this document.

Active travel modes / components

- Cycle-specific maps and signage
- Cycle parking, including covered and secure parking
- Cycle sharing, including e-bikes, e-cargo bikes and trailers, as well as dockless systems

Public transport modes / components

- Local bus services, as well as regional and national coach services as available
- Tram and rail services at local, regional and national scale, and rail feeder services

Vehicle sharing / on-demand components

- On-demand transport / taxi services
- Drop-off and pick-up bay for lift sharing
- Car club bays, with a choice of vehicles including electric vehicles (EVs), small vehicles and vans/estates

Transport-related components

- Cycle parking and repair station
- Car parking for disabled users
- Real-time information on services, and maps, including interactive maps
- Charging for electric vehicles

Place components

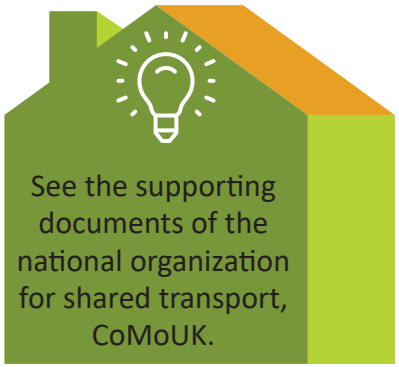
- Seating, including sheltered waiting areas
- High-quality public realm including street trees, landscaping, interactive elements for play, equipment for exercise
- Lighting, water fountain, community noticeboard and public art
- Wifi and phone charging points
- Toilets, baby-changing facilities or showers

Commercial components

- Package delivery lockers
- Kiosk, café or a co/working space
- Cycle sales/repair shop

Sizes / Types of mobility hubs

Sizes and typologies of mobility hub differ between contexts, and what is described as a 'small' hub in one setting might be considered a 'hublet' in another setting. For this reason, this guidance focuses on the number of components and transport modes, rather than size.



			1 + 2 transport modes + core components	1 + 2 transport modes + extra components	3+ transport modes + more components	3+ transport modes + commercial uses
Vehicle sharing components	core	On-demand transport / taxi services	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Drop-off / pick-up bay	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	extra	Car club bays	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transport-related components	core	Cycle parking	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Car parking for disabled users	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Real-time information	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	extra	Interactive map	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Cycle repair station	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Charging for electric vehicles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Place components	core	Seating and shelter	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		High-quality public realm	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Lighting	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	extra	Wifi and phone charging points	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Water fountain	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
		Play features / exercise equipment	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
	more	Toilets / baby-changing / showers	No	No	Yes	Yes
Commercial components	extra	Package delivery lockers	No	No	No	Potentially
		Kiosk	No	No	No	Potentially
		Café	No	No	No	Potentially
		Cycle sales / cycle repair shop	No	No	No	Potentially
		Co-working space	No	No	No	Potentially
Typical locations			Lower-density residential areas / Trunk roads	High streets / Local leisure destinations / Park and ride facilities / Business parks	Village centres / Local and suburban centres / Inner ring roads / Tourist destinations	Town centres/ Railway stations/ Universities

Figure 4: Types of mobility hubs diagram

Planning for mobility hubs

Place outcomes

Mobility hubs can fulfil a broad range of outcomes in suburban, urban and metropolitan settings, including access, environmental and socio-economic benefits. Mobility hubs help to:

- **Shape mobility behaviour** of new residents and communities in major new developments from the outset, including in large urban extensions or new settlements;
- **Address gaps in provision** by extending transport services in an existing network and connecting to other mobility hubs; and
- **Minimise impacts on existing vulnerabilities** in the wider area, such as congestion on the road network, or poor levels of air quality.

Role of the wider transport network

Mobility hubs should be considered as as a network, rather than individual entities, to provide users with confidence that comparable services are available across the local area.

Stakeholders

Planning of a mobility hub can involve many different partners according to its context and purpose. The process can be led by a public, private or community partner, for example:

- **Local and regional government**: at all scales including parish councils and transport authorities;
- **Service providers**: for example in education or healthcare;
- **Infrastructure operators**: rail, highways and electric vehicle charging stations;
- **Mobility service operators**: bus, train, car club and e-bike hire;
- **Private sector**: developers, business parks, and major visitor attractions;
- **Community groups**: including charities and community interest companies;

Leadership of the process is distinct from ownership of the hub itself, which can be provided commercially or offered as an in-kind contribution.

Project brief considerations

Project briefs should always be informed by **a vision for the local movement network and for each mobility hub** that responds to the local context, needs and opportunities. Such vision should consider:

- **Potential users** of the mobility hub, their characteristics and mobility needs;
- **Existing and emerging transport services** in the local movement network, opportunities to integrate with those services and other mobility hubs; and
- **Placemaking needs** in the local area, and the role the mobility hub can play in improving it.

CoMoUK sets out design standards for mobility hubs which can be used to prepare a design brief:

- **Visibility and accessibility**
- **Choice of sustainable transport modes**
- **Safety**
- **Ease of switching between modes**
- **Practical facilities**
- **Social and community appeal**

Location criteria

The precise location of a mobility hub within a development will influence its success and viability. During the masterplanning process, potential sites should be identified and compared based on a range of criteria, including:

Concentration of people living in the wider context and in direct vicinity (within 800m / 10 minutes' walk)

Proximity to a significant trip generator such as a health facility or local centre

Visibility from approaches, and good access from walking and cycling routes

Availability for development, with suitable utilities and easy access to the transport network

Such evaluation can enable a preferred site to be determined in conjunction with other masterplanning considerations.

Decision making

The earlier a mobility hub is considered, the better the chance to maximise its impact, and establish its role in a vision-led transport planning approach. Opportunities exist at each stage, including at:

- **Pre-acquisition and acquisition stages**: considering mobility hub location options as part of the transport and accessibility strategy for a development, to ensure they are included in the site assembly process.
- **Masterplanning stage**: establishing the optimal location criteria,including concentration, proximity, visibility and availability for mobility hub(s) within the masterplan.
- **Delivery and post-delivery stages**: establishing whether a mobility hub can be retrofitted. This may involve consultation, negotiation and some degree of compromise on the location, specification and configuration of the hub:
  - Smaller mobility hubs can be on a street, entailing minimal loss of on-street parking;
  - Larger mobility hubs may need a dedicated site, which may replace a car park; and
  - Pop-up moveable hubs may form an interim option for early development phases.

Service integration

A key influence on the design and operations of a mobility hub is the extent to which individual components are integrated with or independent from one another, for example:

- Transport services, such as buses or shared cycles can be fully independent from one another, and from the hub's operations.
- Alternatively, operational resources and advertising revenue can be shared with those services.
- Mobility hubs can also be fully integrated and run by a single operator, though this is only suitable in a limited number of cases.

It is important for the lead body to explore and understand the implications and consequences of this decision, and to signpost its preferred contractual route in a design brief.

Delivery approaches for mobility hubs

Procurement models

Mobility hub strategies, individual components and services can be procured in different ways. The level of control varies according to the procurement method:

- **Direct control:** the lead body's in-house team develops specification and designs for the the hub, with no external procurement.
- **Service contract:** the lead body commissions and fully funds a tightly specified service, to be delivered by a third party (commercial or voluntary sector).
- **Procured operator:** the lead body develops specification and funds some elements of the hub, and leaves others for the operator to control and fund.
- **Permission to operate:** the lead body engages a third party to develop specification, design and operate the hub, with minimum standards set in a memorandum of understanding, concession agreement or permit.

Operating model

The components and services provided by the mobility hub can be managed and operated in different ways. The level of integration of the partners varies according to the operating model:

- **Lead body:** the lead body's in-house team manages and operates the hub
- **Partnership:** there is a contractual between the lead body and partners who share finances and/or resources
- **Consortium:** there is collaboration between partners, with limited or no sharing of finances or resources
- **Independent third parties:** partners independently manage and operate all aspects of the hub to the specification of the lead body specified by lead body

A common visual identity for a mobility hub, particularly within a network, may help engagement with users and boost utilisation. Branding needs to be considered in conjunction with the selected operating model.

Funding models

Mobility hubs can be supported through a range of different income streams.

- **Transport-related** income streams include:
  - User revenues from transport fares and Car parking;
  - Advertising and sponsorship of the hub and transport services;
  - Grants from Local Authority local transport funds, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and Business Improvement Districts;
  - Developer contributions including Section 106 contributions, Section 75 obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy;
- **Place-related** income streams include:
  - Revenue from the operation of commercial activities in the hub (subject to stewardship business plan);
  - Service charges to residents and business in new developments (subject to engagement as part of the stewardship arrangement);
  - National or local government grants such as high street, regeneration and rural funds.

Managing risk

Different procurement and operating models entail different risks between the project partners in the public, private and third sectors:

- Funding from the public sector should be used to support economic, environmental and social objectives in public policy rather than subsidising commercially viable operations.
- Over-reliance on the private sector should be avoided, whereby individual components could be withdrawn if they make a loss. Over time some components may also vary between being revenue generators and revenue liabilities.

Thought should be given as to which organisations will bear any financial liabilities of the hub and its individual components. A mechanism for cross-subsidy between hub components can be important to the long term success of the hub.

Delivering successfully

The barriers to delivery and the factors that enable success will be determined by project context and the objectives of the body responsible for mobility hubs. The table opposite sets some barriers and success factors for delivering mobility hubs:

Barriers to delivery	Success factors
■ Absence of a larger network of public transport routes and services with which the mobility hub can integrate ■ Lack of direct high-quality local walking, wheeling and cycling routes to the mobility hub ■ The need to deliver mobility hubs and associated movement infrastructure early, so that sustainable lifestyles are enables, with only few users in the initial delivery phases ■ Locational criteria of commercial partners operating public` transport and transport sharing services. ■ Perception of mobility hubs as a superfluous cost, leaving the associated social, environmental and health benefits not identified, articulated and accounted for, with the result that mobility hubs not given the required priority in the making of the place.	■ Modal shift to active travel and public transport services is achieved ■ Stakeholders and community are involved in and informed about the delivery hub and its development process ■ Measurable objectives are tailored to the context (including local travel plans), monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis to inform management decisions if they are not being met ■ The mobility hub is accredited through CoMoUK's national accreditation process. ■ The mobility hub is given appropriate prioritisation in the making of the place, justified by its social, environmental and health benefits that will derive from its delivery in the long term

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Contact us:

0300 1234 500
enquiries@homesengland.gov.uk
@HomesEngland

