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TAN 18 Review - DCFW Recommendations

On 14 April 2026, the Design Commission for Wales convened a workshop bringing together members of the Technical Advisory Group and Design Review Panellists from development, urban design, transport planning, town centres, landscape and local authority backgrounds. The workshop explored how an updated TAN 18 could better support well-designed, well-connected and sustainable places across Wales.

Drawing on the discussion and perspectives shared during the workshop, DCFW has identified the following recommendations to contribute to the evidence base for a review of TAN 18.

1. Strengthen the role of transport in supporting placemaking and good design

Planning policy in Wales has evolved significantly since TAN 18 was published, with placemaking now at its core. An updated TAN should better reflect this shift and strengthen the role of transport in supporting successful places and communities.

Recommendations:

- Align more closely with the placemaking ambitions of Planning Policy Wales, Future Wales and the Placemaking Charter.
- Embed placemaking as a central objective of transport planning and street design.
- Promote design-led approaches that support walkable neighbourhoods, connected communities and thriving town centres.
- Strengthen the role of streets as places that support social interaction, health, wellbeing and active travel, as well as movement.
- Ensure the guidance is applicable across urban, suburban and rural contexts.

2. Strengthen design-led approaches to street design

The principles of good street design are well established but are not consistently reflected in the design and delivery of streets and public spaces. An updated TAN should place greater emphasis on design quality and support streets that balance movement, character, landscape and social function.

Recommendations:

- Reinforce the principles of Manual for Streets as the basis for street design.
- Promote design-led approaches that balance movement, character, landscape and social function.
- Support connected, permeable street networks that integrate development with surrounding communities.
- Encourage more flexible and context-sensitive approaches to parking provision, visibility requirements and street geometry where appropriate.
- Ensure technical requirements support rather than undermine good design outcomes.

3. Address barriers to implementation

Many good principles already exist within policy and guidance but are not consistently delivered in practice. An updated TAN should place greater emphasis on implementation and help address the barriers that continue to prevent good outcomes from being delivered in practice.

Recommendations:

- Provide clearer guidance on how placemaking and design quality should be balanced alongside transport and highway considerations.
- Address barriers created by adoption processes, standards and technical requirements.
- Promote a culture change towards more collaborative, design-led and context-sensitive approaches to street design and decision-making.
- Clarify how TAN 18 should be applied alongside other relevant guidance and standards.
- Support more consistent interpretation and application of the guidance across Wales.

4. Promote long-term stewardship

Long-term management and maintenance are often considered too late in the design process, despite having a significant influence on design quality and placemaking outcomes. An updated TAN should promote stewardship as a core consideration from the outset and support the long-term success of streets and places.

Recommendations:

- Encourage consideration of maintenance and stewardship from the outset of the design process.
- Promote integrated approaches to streets, landscape, green infrastructure and SuDS.
- Recognise the importance of long-term quality and adaptability.
- Provide greater clarity regarding responsibilities for management and maintenance.
- Support approaches that help places remain successful over time.

5. Address systemic barriers beyond TAN 18

Many of the barriers to delivering placemaking and sustainable transport objectives sit beyond the scope of TAN 18 itself. A review of TAN 18 should provide an opportunity to consider these wider systemic barriers and how effective implementation could be supported in practice.

Recommendations:

- Use the evidence gathered through a review of TAN 18 to inform a subsequent programme of work between planning, transport and highways disciplines to address wider barriers to implementation.
- Review whether existing standards, guidance and adoption processes collectively support the delivery of placemaking and sustainable transport objectives.
- Consider how implementation of an updated TAN could be supported through an implementation plan, training, exemplars and other forms of support.
- Monitor outcomes following any update to TAN 18 and identify continuing barriers to delivery.

Appendix A – Workshop Participants

The workshop brought together members of the Technical Advisory Group and Design Review Panellists with expertise in development, urban design, transport planning, town centres, landscape architecture and local government.

Design Commission for Wales

- Max Hampton
- Jen Heal

Design Review Panellists

- Gareth Howell, EDP (Urban Design)
- Wendy Maden, Bath & North East Somerset Council (Town Centres)
- Matt Thomas, SLR (Transport Planning)
- Elfed Roberts, Codi Group (Development)
- Stephen Smith, Swansea Council (Local Authority)
- Simon Richards, Land Studio (Landscape Architecture)

Welsh Government Planning Division

- James Hooker
- Marged Wyatt
- Owain Dolan-Gray

Technical Advisory Group

- Natalie Grohmann, Welsh Government
- Matthew Gilbert, Transport for Wales
- Rob Jones, Transport for Wales
- Amanda Phillips, Transport for Wales
- Ben George, Transport for Wales