

## 5. PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

### 5.1 Introduction

#### Local Plan Strategy

5.1.1 The following Local Plan objectives which apply to the policies contained within this section of the Plan form part of 24 Local Plan objectives identified for the Local Plan, listed in paragraph 1.4.4 :

- Seek a more sustainable and balanced transport system based upon reduced dependence on the private car and increased emphasis on public transport, community transport, cycling and walking.
- Improve the levels of accessibility within and to the District via sustainable modes of transport.

5.1.2 A key aim of Government policy is to integrate land-use planning and transport to promote more sustainable transport choices, promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling and to minimise the need to travel by car. PPG13 – Transport acknowledges that development plans and policies can play an important role in contributing to the reduction of travel by car as they represent the opportunity to promote accessible patterns of development and to plan for transport needs in an integrated way.

5.1.3 The Local Plan Development Strategy seeks to minimise the need to travel by car by locating development within the urban areas of Malvern, Tenbury and Upton and in sustainable locations where there is access to a range of local services and public transport.

5.1.4 PPG13 also emphasises the need to recognise the links between development plans and the Local Transport Plan. The Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) forms a five-year strategy for the implementation of local transport measures to deliver local transport needs in a co-ordinated way with the aim of working towards a sustainable transport network.

5.1.5 There are various other initiatives which are closely linked to the LTP and the Local Plan. In particular :-

- the Bus and Information Strategy prepared by the County Council which aims to deliver effective passenger transport information for users;
- the Rural Transport Partnership, which seeks to improve access to facilities, services, training and employment by working in partnership with local communities, transport providers and statutory authorities;
- the successful Malvern Matters Rural Bus Challenge Bid which aims to develop an integrated and improved network of passenger transport services across the District in response to issues identified in the District Council's Community Strategy Action Plan.

5.1.6 A Strategic Transportation Action Plan has been prepared for the District as part of the Vision 21 Partnership's work on the Community Strategy. This complements Local Plan policies and seeks to support initiatives aimed at increasing accessibility by public transport and reducing the reliance on the private car.

5.1.7 It is essential that the long term prosperity of Malvern Hills District and its attractiveness, in terms of a place to live, work and invest are not compromised due to the characteristics of its transport infrastructure or poor levels of accessibility. This is particularly important for Malvern, having regard to its role and location within the Central Technology Belt, the longer-term prospects of its major employment and commercial areas and the town's connections to strategic transportation networks.

5.1.8 Consequently, the District Council will actively seek to ensure that accessibility issues associated with Malvern are adequately reflected in regional, sub-regional and local strategies, decisions and investment programmes, which have both transportation and

development implications for the town and the wider area. This will involve lobbying and partnership development, including gaining recognition of the need for a sustainable transportation strategy for Malvern, based upon a comprehensive and wide-ranging study, within the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan.

## 5.2 Sustainable Transport

### Safeguarding Land for Transport Infrastructure

#### **Policy ST1 - Safeguarding Land for Transport Infrastructure**

- (1) Land will be safeguarded for the purpose of improving the District's transport infrastructure. Development will not be permitted where:**
- a) it would adversely affect existing or proposed public transport routes, facilities and interchanges or would adversely affect the potential for enhancing their capacity and use;**
  - b) it would result in the loss of, or adversely affect the character and function of an existing or proposed pedestrian route, cycleway, public right of way or Quiet Lane initiative unless an alternative can be provided which is equivalent or demonstrably better in quality, attractiveness, convenience and safety;**
  - c) it would prejudice the reopening of former transport routes such as disused railway lines for recreational purposes; or**
  - d) it would adversely affect the implementation of a highway improvement or traffic management scheme.**
- (2) Land at or around Great Malvern Station and Malvern Link Station as shown on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded for station improvement purposes. Development which would prejudice station improvements will not be permitted.**

#### Reasoned Justification

- 5.2.1 The aim of the Policy is to safeguard land for the purposes of improving the District's transport infrastructure and to resist development which would affect the potential for enhancing the capacity for public transport, walking and cycling. Safeguarded sites will be identified on the Proposals Map.
- 5.2.2 The Policy will therefore resist development which would affect the potential for enhancing the capacity and use of these activities and will where necessary safeguard land to secure future improvements. For example, Great Malvern and Malvern Link rail stations provide important commuter services to a range of destinations including Birmingham, London and particularly Worcester. The County Council has recognised that both stations can play a part in supporting the provision of park and ride facilities for Worcester City. It has commissioned studies into enhancements and improvements at both stations which could include bus interchange facilities and increased car and cycle parking facilities aimed at encouraging the use of rail travel as an alternative to the private car.
- 5.2.3 The need for safeguarding land at the stations and the implementation of interchange improvements is further strengthened by the provision of improved rail services. The services between Hereford and Birmingham, via Malvern Link and Great Malvern, have been enhanced to an hourly frequency from September 2004. In addition, all congested national rail routes within the West Midlands travel to work area (which includes Worcestershire) will be reviewed as part of the Strategic Rail Authority's (SRA) Route Utilisation Strategy. The review will guide the SRA in managing franchise agreements and investments to make the best use of the existing rail network. These changes will support the availability of more sustainable transport choices.
- 5.2.4 The Malvern Matters Rural Bus Challenge Bid was approved by central government and is aimed at providing an integrated network of passenger transport services that meet today's

needs of rural communities. The Bid includes service improvement to both strategic bus routes linking the District with surrounding towns, local service improvements and new demand responsive services in some of the more remote rural areas where there is currently limited access to public transport. It also includes bus and train interchange facilities at Malvern. Developer contributions may be sought in appropriate circumstances to assist in the implementation of elements of the Bid. Proposals for the use of former transport routes for recreational purposes such as walking, cycling and bridleways may be the subject of a temporary planning consent in order to safeguard the potential for the route to be re-opened.

- 5.2.5 Whilst only two specific areas are shown on the Proposals Map the District Council is aware that work is being undertaken to identify improvements and positive enhancements to various transport networks, not least the enhancement of cycle networks proposed in the County Cycle Strategy. Policy ST1 will be important in ensuring that opportunities for network enhancements whether these are rail, road, cycle or walking based are not lost or prejudiced due to development.
- 5.2.6 The Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) (2001 – 2006) and the County Cycle Strategy for the District seek to increase the percentage of trips made by walking and cycling. There are a number of ways in which the Local Plan can assist in meeting these targets such as supporting initiatives aimed at improving local road environments including Home Zones, Safer Routes to Schools and Quiet Lanes and through the provision of new links aimed at providing a continuous network for the benefit of the user. The County Cycle Strategy incorporates a number of proposed local cycling routes within Malvern town together with other regional routes across the District and linking with other towns. Proposals which may prejudice the implementation of such schemes will not be permitted.
- 5.2.7 Development which would result in the loss of, or would adversely affect the character or function of a traffic management scheme or an existing pedestrian route, cycle way or public right of way will not be permitted unless an alternative route can be provided which is equivalent or demonstrably better in quality, attractiveness, convenience and safety. Additionally, development likely to prejudice the reopening of former transport routes such as disused railway lines for the purposes of walking and cycling will not be permitted.
- 5.2.8 Worcestershire County Council has begun the process of bringing forward two additional bus based Park and Ride sites to serve the City of Worcester and to complement the existing Park and Ride site located at Perdiswell (Worcester north). It is the intention of the County Council that the two additional sites will address traffic flows into the City from the east and west.
- 5.2.9 Malvern Hills District Council supports, in principle, the identification of additional Park and Ride facilities to reduce traffic flows both within and into Worcester City. However, the District Council believes that to be effective, Park and Ride facilities associated with traffic flows to the west of the City should address commuting via the A449, between Malvern and the City.
- 5.2.10 Furthermore, an effective Park and Ride strategy would contain a basket of improvement measures both within Malvern and adjacent to the City, and would address the need to increase both rail and bus based commuting.
- 5.2.11 The Plan does not contain any specific proposals for new public car parking within the District. A new public car park to the rear of Belle View Terrace in Malvern was completed in 2001. The opportunity exists to extend the car park southwards though such a proposal would need to be considered as part of the District Council's Capital Programme and would require land acquisition.

## **Public Transport, Walking and Cycling**

### **Policy ST2 - Public Transport, Walking and Cycling**

**Development proposals, wherever physically feasible and appropriate, will be required to provide suitable opportunities for improving access to public transport services and for enabling walking and cycling by means of new links and other facilities (such as cycle parking) in ways which enhance existing or proposed services and networks in the Malvern Hills District and thereby encourage more journeys to be made by these essentially sustainable modes of travel.**

#### Reasoned Justification

- 5.2.12 Public transport, walking and cycling have a valuable role to play in increasing access to services and in minimising the need to travel by private car. The provision of good quality, safe and efficient alternative modes of travelling can also assist in encouraging travellers to combine car trips with more sustainable forms of transport as well as providing opportunities for recreational activities and improved health through the provision of walking and cycling links.
- 5.2.13 Provision should be made within new developments where appropriate for pedestrian and cycle ways which link to the existing network and provide access to public transport in a manner which encourages their use. Where such provision cannot be achieved, or is inappropriate because of the small scale of the proposed new development, the developer may be required to enter into a Section 106 agreement to enable the construction of off-site provision such as elements of the County Cycle Strategy.
- 5.2.14 Particular attention will be given to the introduction of footways and cycle facilities which link new development to existing community facilities and services in the rural areas, where generally there is an absence of adequate facilities along existing country roads and lanes.

## **Parking, Servicing and Commuted Parking Requirements**

### **Policy ST3 - Parking, Servicing and Commuted Parking Requirements**

- (1) Development will only be permitted where on-site vehicle parking is kept to a minimum necessary to enable the development to function.**
- (2) Development proposals will be required to provide on-site parking and servicing in accordance with the standards set out in Appendix 3 of the Plan.**
- (3) The standards to be applied for the provision of:**
  - a) cycle, motorcycle and disabled parking will be regarded as minimum provision.**
  - b) car and lorry parking will be regarded as maximum provision.**
- (4) Where on-site parking cannot be provided within the curtilage of the development, the Council may, in appropriate circumstances relax the requirements, where highway safety is not compromised and the shortfall can be addressed through an approved programme of mitigation measures.**

Reasoned Justification

- 5.2.15 The car-parking standards in Appendix 3 to this Plan are based on those set out in PPG13 – Transport, PPG3-Housing, Traffic Advisory Leaflet 05/95 and, in respect of cycle parking, the standards carried forward from the previous Malvern Hills District Local Plan.
- 5.2.16 PPG13 and RPG11 both advocate restricting parking provision through the use of standards based on maximum provision rather than minimum standards. PPG3 advises that car parking standards that result, on average, in development with more than 1.5 off-street car parking spaces per dwelling are unlikely to reflect the Government's emphasis on securing sustainable residential environments. It is however, recognised that parking needs vary. For example, there may be locations and housing types where significantly lower levels of off-street parking can be sought. But for family housing, and in rural locations where there is heavier reliance on the private car, higher levels of car parking may be appropriate together with increased visitor parking to avoid parking on footways or where it may obstruct narrow rural roads. Good design will influence the application of parking policies. Worcestershire County Council is currently preparing a set of countywide car parking standards based on Government guidance.
- 5.2.17 In cases where the Council considers that the requirements may be relaxed, the applicant will need to demonstrate that there are overriding reasons why the provision cannot be made on site and agree to an approved programme of mitigation measures. These measures may for example, include a contribution towards the enhancement of an existing nearby car park to encourage greater use or a financial contribution towards improvements to public transport services. In accordance with the advice in Circular 6/98 (para 14), parking standards will be treated flexibly for affordable housing as car ownership rates are generally lower than those for general market housing. This may make it easier for the developer to provide affordable housing.
- 5.2.18 Parking provision in town centre locations will be carefully assessed. While, there can be benefits in improving the environment through the reduction in cars, this needs to be balanced against the need to provide good quality, short stay parking in order to retain the viability of the town centres and for those visitors without convenient access to public transport. The accessibility of alternative modes of transport or the potential to improve links will be considered in determining the appropriateness of parking requirements.

**Minimising Travel Impacts****Policy ST4 - Minimising Travel Impacts**

- (1) Proposals which are likely to have significant transport implications will be required to submit a Transport Assessment. The assessments should clearly demonstrate that all transport impacts have been assessed and can be addressed through an approved programme of mitigation works which maximises the opportunities to safely access the site on foot, by cycle and by public transport.**
- (2) Travel plans will be required for all new developments including change of use likely to have significant transport implications including major development proposals above the thresholds set out in Annex D of PPG13 Transport.**

Reasoned Justification

- 5.2.19 The production of Transport Assessments is advocated in PPG13 and will be required where development has the potential to cause a significant impact on local traffic conditions. The detail of the assessments will vary but in the main should identify how occupiers and visitors will travel to and from the development, the impact of freight or delivery vehicles to and from the site and the impact these activities will have on neighbouring uses. The requirement for development proposals to be accompanied by a Travel Plan is also identified in PPG13. To be effective, a Travel Plan should have measurable outputs to ensure that agreed transport

targets are met. The implementation of such plans will be secured by way of conditions or by a Section 106 Agreement.

5.2.20 Proposals which would have a material impact on the safety or efficient operation of the trunk road network will be subject to careful scrutiny.

5.2.21 Where development proposals will have significant transport implications, an approved programme of mitigation works will be required which maximises the opportunity to safely access the site on foot, by cycle and by public transport. Such measures may include the provision of:

- new or improvements to existing pedestrian or cycle routes and links to public transport provision;
- new or improvements to existing public transport services; and
- traffic management and calming to improve road safety and conditions for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Safer Routes to Schools;
- initiatives such as home zones to limit speeds to 20mph or less;
- HGV restrictions aimed at improving road safety and the local environment.

5.2.22 In all cases, the measures should be designed on and off site so that they are as attractive to the user as the private car.