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9. TRANSPORT

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVE:

Achieve a safe and integrated transport network, reduce the need to travel by car and facilitate walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 Over the last 20 years, the amount of traffic on Dorset’s roads has doubled and is predicted to grow further. This is causing increasing problems in our towns and villages and increasing concern about the local environment, the health and welfare of the local population and the prosperity of local communities. At the same time as a general increase in traffic, there have been growing concerns about the failure of public transport to play a role in reducing car use and to meet the needs of local communities. This is particularly the case in more rural areas where people, who have limited or no use of a car, are left isolated and cannot access education, employment and other essential services.
- 9.1.2 Current Government guidance places significant emphasis on the need for integrated transport and reducing the need to travel. At a regional level, RPG10 encourages “more sustainable travel choices” and “rural transport strategies”¹. Government guidance aims to co-ordinate land use planning with transportation planning, and promoting development “at locations highly accessible by means other than the car”². Consequently, Local Plan allocations and Local Transport Plan³ proposals must be closely linked to form a sustainable Development Plan for the area.
- 9.1.3 It is important that the District Council ensures that development does not proceed in advance of the provision of necessary pre-requisite transport infrastructure.

9.2 Integrated Transport Strategy

- 9.2.1 Integrated transport is at the very heart of the Government's policies of sustainable modern transport to tackle the problems of congestion and pollution⁴. The aims and objectives of developing integrated transport are to:
- improve the environment;
 - help economic development;
 - use scarce resources more efficiently, including road and rail networks;
 - enhance the vitality of town and city centres;
 - meet the needs of rural areas;
 - reduce social exclusion and take account of the accessibility needs of all sectors of society, including the disabled;
 - ensure a high standard of safety across all forms of transport and improve personal security.

¹ Policy TRAN7, Regional Planning Guidance for the South West, RPG10, 2001, DTLR.

² Para 3 : PPG 13: Transport, 2001, DETR.

³ Local Transport Plan for Dorset, 2000, DCC.

⁴ PPG 13 : Transport, 2001, DETR.

- 9.2.2 The Local Plan strategy acknowledges the importance of the economy and the fact that in rural areas there are few alternatives to the private car. In recognition of such factors, a pragmatic approach is sought whereby issues such as the establishment of ‘accessibility profiles’ for housing and employment served by public transport or the management of car parks in terms of location, pricing and length of stay are carefully considered and reviewed, thus identifying locations or networks to be targeted for improvement.
- 9.2.3 Transport does not exist in isolation or for its own sake – it is a means of meeting the needs and objectives of people, communities and all levels of government.
- 9.2.4 In addition to this Local Plan, therefore, the County Council produces a Local Transport Plan (LTP). The Local Transport Plan sets out a strategy for transport in Dorset and demonstrates how the authority will improve the local transport network to benefit the community and visitors. The central theme of the plan is sustainability – ‘meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.
- 9.2.5 Dorset’s priorities are road safety, accessibility, congestion and pollution, and these form the basis of the long term and short term transport strategy. The shared priorities of congestion and air quality are dealt with jointly, since incidences of poor air quality are limited in the plan area, and can be dealt with by the same measures for tackling congestion. Other local priorities are:-
- reducing traffic impacts on our environment
 - economic development
 - asset management.
- 9.2.6 The Local Transport Plan, based on these priorities, covers the rural area and market and coastal towns, together with travel within the Weymouth to Dorchester corridor. It is organised around the Government’s shared priorities for transport and focuses on improving accessibility, public transport and reducing the problems of congestion, pollution and traffic accidents. Dorset County Council has also determined local priorities of environmental protection, economic development, and asset management.
- 9.2.7 Dorset is a largely rural county with a settlement pattern comprising market towns serving the needs of the small villages that surround them. Access to jobs, education and training, shops and businesses, leisure facilities, health and other services is a critical issue. The LTP therefore identifies actions in relation to:
- improving access to services through effective rural transport solutions and roads, particularly to provide better access to health provision, recreation, training and work;
 - identifying where barriers such as rural poverty and hidden deprivation prevent individuals and communities from accessing services;
 - improving information technology opportunities to increase electronic access to services;
 - providing consistent and locally available, up-to-date information so that people can make informed choices;
 - retaining the vitality of rural communities and market towns whilst ensuring sustainable countryside and land management.

- 9.2.8 In the more rural parts of the region, such as West Dorset, reliance on car transport will continue to be high, reflecting the difficulty of serving dispersed populations with public transport. However, working with the County Council to achieve a better balance of homes, jobs and services in the ‘market’ towns should help to address some of the aims of the strategy by facilitating attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle networks linking residential areas, employment centres, town centres, schools and colleges and other key destinations as well as linking smaller settlements and district centres to main town centres. It must be recognised, however, that in historic towns there is often limited space or other constraints and the construction of physical measures may fundamentally conflict with other aims and objectives.
- 9.2.9 The overall transport strategy seeks to reduce the impact of traffic through appropriate network management, particularly in the towns in view of their evolving importance in serving their rural areas, reinforced by the spatial strategy. Traffic management measures considered will include 20mph zones, parking management, improved public transport facilities including measures to assist buses and rail interchange, junction improvements and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. The District Council will continue to work with the County Council in the development of schemes in order to secure linked improvements in the public realm.
- 9.2.10 The impact of lorry movements in our towns and villages is a particular concern for many people. Heavy goods vehicles in particular put pressure on the road network as well as creating environmental problems of noise, vibration and air pollution for local residents. It is the increasing size and weight of heavy goods vehicles using inappropriate rural roads that has become a significant problem in Dorset, with many reports of damage being caused to roadside features and properties. Requests from communities for some form of restriction are widespread, together with calls for transferring freight to rail.
- 9.2.11 Recently there has been some growth in rail freight in the county, particularly in respect of movement of minerals, but other traffic has transferred to road. The County Council will continue to support initiatives that transfer freight to rail but inevitably, with a limited rail network in the county, the distribution of freight within the plan area is likely to continue to be dominated by road transport. In managing freight distribution, a balance has to be struck between meeting the concerns of local residents and maintaining the prosperity and competitiveness of local businesses. Dorset does not have a lot of heavy industry and freight movement is predominantly smaller consignments to dispersed locations, where road is the most suitable method of transport.

Table 9.1: Integrated Transport Strategy

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY
<p>The strategy aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i) Promote choice by increasing the relative advantage of walking, cycling and public transport;ii) Reduce dependency on the private car;iii) Increase the attractiveness of urban centres. <p>This will be achieved by a combination of approaches, as outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The use of car parking charges as a means of encouraging the use of alternative modes and to target particular journey purposes for restraint, such as commuting journeys.• A requirement for Travel Plans for developments likely to generate significant travel demand.• A review of the use of 'commuted payments' for the provision of off-site parking as it may be more appropriate to meet requirements for access to sites by seeking contributions to measures to assist public transport, walking and cycling.• The provision of safe and attractive pedestrian routes, linked to policies which promote local activity to encourage a change in travel choices. Measures could include traffic calming and environmental improvements.• The provision of safe cycle routes and cycle priority measures, particularly in new development, together with secure cycle parking/facilities where appropriate.• The establishment of 'accessibility profiles' for housing, employment and other destinations served by public transport to reflect the catchment areas served and quality of services, thus identifying routes to be targeted for improvement.• The provision of park and ride schemes to encourage the use of public transport by rail and bus.• The use of residents' parking schemes, particularly in conjunction with a pricing deterrent to long stay parking.

9.2.12 Government guidance also advises that the adequacy of transport infrastructure is an important consideration in the granting of planning permission⁵.

9.2.13 If the Local Plan's aims to reduce reliance on the motor car are to be realised, provision must be made to encourage the use of alternative means of transport. This is acknowledged in the Structure Plan, which states that it will be necessary "to create opportunities to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car"⁶. Provision will still need to be made for the car, but tailored to suit local conditions and to encourage more effective patterns of use.

⁵ Paras. 3, 29 and 82, PPG 13 : Transport, 2001, DETR.

⁶ Para. 2.32, Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (CSP 28), 2001

9.2.14 Traffic and transport emerged as a key issue through early consultation stages on the Local Plan. A need to review the strategy for Dorchester town centre and particularly the Charles Street site (see Policy EA14) has led to the County and District Councils preparing a traffic model for the county town. This has informed the Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan (DTEP), a key part of which is to identify opportunities for reducing traffic in the historic core of the town, together with measures for increasing pedestrian priority so that local people and visitors have more opportunity to take in and enjoy that environment.

9.3 Management of the Highway Network

9.3.1 Nearly all journeys made in Dorset use the highway network, whether by car, lorry, bus, bicycle or on foot. It is, therefore, essential that the overall highway network be managed in an efficient and effective manner.

9.3.2 The operation of highway based transport in the UK, from the motorway network to minor access, is underpinned by the establishment of a hierarchy. This sets the framework against which development control decisions can be made to determine the nature of access or highway requirements in association with development proposals. The aim of establishing the hierarchy is to influence the distribution of traffic onto the most suitable route for its journey purpose to assist in:

- helping traffic to use roads safely;
- discouraging the use of local roads for through traffic;
- underpinning the spatial hierarchy created by the buildings and spaces nearby;
- creating safer conditions for all road users.

9.3.3 There are two tiers of strategic highway in the District. The higher tier network comprises primary routes, which are defined by Central Government. These are generally strategically important routes, connecting primary destinations and catering for longer distance journeys and lorry movements in particular. The County Council will continue to encourage traffic to use this limited higher quality network, although it recognises that many sections remain unsuitable for the levels of traffic that are being carried. Encouraging traffic onto this network still has benefits, however, since it reduces environmental and safety problems on less suitable lower tier roads.

9.3.4 In recognising this tension, one of the County Council's overarching objectives, in the Local Transport Plan, for managing the highway network and its impact on the environment, focuses on reducing levels of inappropriate speed, not only where this is a major contributory factor to accidents, but also in areas where local communities find speed intimidating and detrimental to their quality of life. The objective also focuses on ameliorating damage to rural communities on heavily trafficked routes such as the A35, through traffic management measures, improved routing and signing and, where necessary, improvements and ensuring the more effective functioning of Dorset's market towns through traffic management measures that restrict or remove unnecessary traffic.

- 9.3.5 In addition to the Primary routes, the road network comprises county distributor roads which are roads that link the towns and major centres of activity to each other and with the primary network. Below this tier, the roads tend to be even more multi-functional; they can be residential, suburban shopping streets, a country lane or part of a housing estate. In these cases, a clear definition of their function is often difficult to determine. Differences between wholly residential roads and other types of road are, however, not only of scale and use. Considerations are involved which do not apply elsewhere in the road system. Residential roads and footpaths are an integral part of housing layout where surroundings free from extraneous traffic and traffic nuisance are of prime importance. On minor residential roads, where journeys start and finish, motor vehicles should not have priority over other users.
- 9.3.6 The establishment of a hierarchy, reinforced by spatial elements, can provide a convenient and easily understood transition from distributor roads, where drivers' requirements are dominant, to those roads where pedestrians' or cyclists' needs are of greatest importance.

Access to the Strategic Highway Network

- 9.3.7 The control of accesses to the strategic network is essential to ensure operational efficiency and safety⁷ and, therefore, the following policy will apply where the formation of new, or intensification of existing, accesses to the strategic highway network is proposed.

POLICY TRAN1 ACCESS TO THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY NETWORK

The formation of new, or intensification of existing accesses to the strategic highway network, as a result of development, will be resisted to ensure operational efficiency of the network, unless it can be demonstrated that the operation or safety of the network would not be compromised.

Local Highway Network: Road Layouts

- 9.3.8 Making the best use of existing transport infrastructure including redefinition or reallocation of existing road space can form an important element of any transport strategy to support cycling, walking and alternative public transport access, provided that the strategy also complements other aims such as promoting higher quality design and environments, or managing rural roads to avoid over urbanisation / unnecessary sign clutter or compromising safety. This is recognised in paragraph 9.8.3. Nevertheless as the highway network is upgraded/modernised to reflect evolving transport needs, every practical opportunity will be made to cater for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. This may be in the form of re-allocating road space to assist cyclists at junctions, such as the introduction of Advanced Stop Lines, or upgrading signals to include cycle or pedestrian facilities. Improving local links, particularly in connection with new development to increase the permeability of towns is also important to encourage more people to walk and cycle to work or school. Whilst the control of accesses to the strategic network is essential to ensure operational efficiency and safety, alternative considerations may apply at the lower tiers of the hierarchy and within settlements. The structure of the road network is an important factor in enabling a reduction in road use (through the provision of direct routes between destinations) and improving accessibility both on foot, by bicycle and by car.

⁷ PPG13 Transport Annexe 8 para.3

- 9.3.9 The Government believes that the design and layout of new developments can lead to safer environments where people can go about their daily business without being intimidated by traffic. It expects local planning authorities to give more priority to walking and ensure the provision of more direct and convenient pedestrian routes⁸.
- 9.3.10 In essence, designing the layout of a proposed development is an iterative process. Once the broad spatial and urban design frameworks have been established the appropriate movement of people to, from and within the development should be fully considered. Then, as the design evolves, there is the task of ensuring these framework routes will be used appropriately by the intended modes for the intended journeys. Useful sources of advice in considering development layouts can be found in, for example: Residential Roads and Footpaths Design Bulletin 32, DoE and DoT HMSO April 1992; Places, Streets and Movement - A companion guide to Design Bulletin 32 Residential Roads and Footpaths, DETR September 1998; By Design - Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards a Better Practice, DETR, CABE, May 2000; Urban Design Compendium, English Partnerships, the Housing Corporation, August 2000; By Design: Better Places to Live - a companion guide to PPG3, DTLR, CABE, September 2001; Home Zone Design Guidelines, IHIE, June 2002; Paving the Way - How we achieve clean, safe and attractive streets, ODPM, CABE, 2002; Urban Design Guidance, Urban Design Frameworks, development briefs and master plans, Urban Design Group 2002; Safer Places - the Planning System and Crime Prevention; and Planning and Access for Disabled People: ODPM/Home Office, 2003.
- 9.3.11 It is important that every opportunity is taken to increase the permeability and legibility of settlements through the development process. Permeability relates to the extent to which an environment allows people a choice of routes through it and a permeable road structure provides a number of alternative routes between any two points. Legibility is the degree to which an urban area is readily navigated, influenced primarily by landmark buildings and other features, road layout, and the positioning of buildings in relation to the street, which help a person identify where they are and how to reach their destination. This Plan, therefore, aims to ensure that new road layouts are designed to maximise their permeability and legibility, where land ownership and other constraints allow.

⁸ A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, 1998, DETR.

Table 9.2: Permeable and Legible Streets

Permeable and Legible Streets

Grid street layouts allow greater freedom of movement and more direct access to all parts of a settlement for all modes of transport, including pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, provided that the size of the block is not excessive and that freedom of movement is not curtailed by the higher incidence of potential road conflicts. Variations within the grid structure along the more minor routes (creating a 'deformed grid') that take into account local topography and natural features avoid creating monotonous, straight vistas, and generally decrease the number of potential road conflicts and improve ease of movement⁹.

The alignment of blocks and streets should focus the pedestrian's attention upon key landmark features, such as church spires and public buildings, which provide locally identifiable features. There should be relatively few changes in direction along the main streets and distributor roads leading into the settlement and between key public areas¹⁰.

The use of a hierarchical structure of road widths (including the footways and verges, ie: all of the public realm), can improve legibility where it indicates the importance of the street, in terms of the motorised and pedestrian traffic that it carries and the route it takes between key community buildings or areas.

The branched form of street patterns that has been commonly developed over the past thirty years, comprising culs-de-sac linked to a treelike structure, generally provides only one route for vehicles between any two points in a settlement. Such layouts limit and often lengthen the choice of routes, lack flexibility for public transport and other services, and have little sense of place.

A comparatively high number of directional changes along the main roads creates a confusing street pattern with low levels of legibility.

POLICY TRAN2 PERMEABLE, LEGIBLE LAYOUTS

Where a development is likely to generate significant levels of travel demand, the layout should:

- i) include provision for a choice of convenient links to the existing road network, to reduce the length and number of trips;
- ii) incorporate pedestrian and cycle links, with cycle links to the existing cycleway network where this is feasible;
- iii) not be overly complex in plan;
- iv) conform to a hierarchy of road widths (including the pavement and verges, ie: all of the public realm); and
- v) enable new routes, or links to existing routes which form the main routes through the settlement, to focus the observer's attention upon key landmark features.

⁹ Page 9, By Design – Better places to Live - A Companion Guide to PPG3, 2001, DTLR.

¹⁰ The Social Logic of Space, 1984, B. Hillier and J. Hanson, and Solar Energy and Housing Design Volume 1: Principles, Objectives and Guidelines, 1994, S. Yannas, Architectural Association and Department of Trade and Industry, Architectural Association Publications, London.

Rear Service Provision

9.3.12 It is an objective of the District Council to improve rear service provision where opportunities for doing so arise. When commercial and shopping areas are being redeveloped, the Council will look for an appropriate area for servicing to be provided by the developer. The timing of implementation of such areas will, therefore, depend on the rate of redevelopment in each locality. Where service area proposals involve the provision or improvements of existing highways, these shall be constructed in accordance with the County Council's highway standards so that they may be adopted by the Highway Authority.

9.4 Roadside Facilities

9.4.1 Whilst the promotion of sustainable transport choices underlies the objective of this Plan, it is recognised that the car will have an important role to play for some journeys. Good quality facilities for the travelling public are, therefore, very important, particularly on the strategic network since it is designed for longer distance travel. Detailed advice on the design and location of facilities was given in two Government Circulars, (Circular 4/88 and Advice Note TA 57/87)¹¹. Whilst Circular 4/88 has now been superseded, the Highways Agency Strategic Plan for Operating the Network encourages local authorities to identify locations where roadside facilities are inadequate and to favour proposals that take proper account of the needs of lorry drivers over those that do not.

9.4.2 The Government aims to deliver improved roadside facilities for drivers and their passengers, in collaboration with local authorities and the private sector¹². Where a site is being considered which is situated close to or on any part of the trunk road network, the Highways Agency will be consulted in respect of any such facility proposed.

9.4.3 Dorset County Council's strategy for the provision of roadside facilities was adopted in 1994 and used to inform the Structure Plan. It was agreed that the needs of travellers on Dorset's primary routes could be most effectively met by the provision of a small number of service areas at key locations. The strategy suggests that facilities should be located at 10-15 mile intervals, preferably at the intersection of primary routes. Although the strategy did not specify particular sites, it defined the localities within which service areas should be located considering the following factors:

- the needs of drivers and their passengers for rest, refreshment, toilets and other services which allow them to continue their journey in safety and comfort.
- the environmental impact of the proposed facility.
- the safe and efficient operation of the highway: the number of junctions and accesses on primary routes must be minimised in order to reduce accident risk.

9.4.4 Roadside facilities are required for reasons of safety and journey ambience. They can also provide tourist or other information. Coach and HGV drivers need different facilities in terms of the room and time needed to be parked, or the ability of the facility to perhaps provide for overnight accommodation to comply with the EU Drivers Hours regulations. Lack of suitable facilities may result in these vehicles diverting onto unsuitable routes or into the towns.

¹¹ Circular 4/88, "The Control of Development on Trunk Roads", D of T; and Advice Note Ta 57/87, "Roadside Features", D of T.

¹² Para. 68, A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, 1998, DETR.

- 9.4.5 In 2002 the Highways Agency developed a route management strategy for the A30 / A35 / A31, between Exeter and Southampton, which forms part of the Primary road network through the District. The strategy identified two route specific objectives relating to roadside facilities:– to provide adequate roadside facilities for road users over the whole route including HGVs; and to improve safety for all road users, by implementing measures to provide adequate lay-bys / services areas. The study recognised that, within West Dorset, Dorchester is well placed to provide facilities, not least since it is at the junction of two primary routes and further consideration should be given to identifying an appropriate location or locations. It is expected that, in the Bridport area, the existing service stations, together with the parking/rest and refreshment area on the A35(T) near Eype, will continue to meet the needs of Trunk Road users for the foreseeable future.
- 9.4.6 It is recognised that such provisions for roadside facilities may not necessarily be coincident with a park and ride facility due to their different functions.
- 9.4.7 In addition to park and ride or roadside facilities for the travelling public, there is also a need for facilities for HGV drivers to avoid them having to divert into towns or use unsuitable laybys. As part of the search process outlined above, opportunities to accommodate HGV needs will also be sought, possibly in conjunction with identified employment sites.

POLICY TRAN3 PRIMARY ROUTE SERVICE AREAS

Proposals for a new primary route service area will be considered at Dorchester. Such facilities should provide for the full range of facilities appropriate for trunk roads, namely fuel, food (to meet the needs of all types of highway users), information, toilets (to remain open 24 hours each day), picnic areas, parking for cars, cars towing caravans/trailers, heavy goods vehicles and coaches.

9.5 Major Highway Improvements

- 9.5.1 Government guidance acknowledges that the road system cannot continually be upgraded to meet demand and, as such, development plans should aim to reduce the need to travel by car¹³. This is also reflected in the Regional Planning Guidance for the South West¹⁴.

13 PPG13: Transport, 2001, DTLR.

14 Policy TRAN1, RPG10: Regional Planning Guidance for the South West, 2001, DETR.

9.5.2 Restrictions on public expenditure and concern about the environmental effects of road traffic have led to a selective approach to road improvements. Nevertheless, the effective movement of people and goods is essential to economic prosperity. The key aim of Dorset's transport strategy is, therefore, to provide opportunities to meet travel needs in ways which minimise environmental damage and costs, provide maximum choice, and improve safety. This view is in part affirmed in the Government White Paper on Transport¹⁵, which suggests: *“Since new roads can lead to more traffic, adding to the problem not reducing it, all plausible options need to be considered before a new road is built. Carefully targeted improvements to existing roads will be considered, generally as part of wider packages including traffic management measures. Traffic calming and measures to reduce traffic will also be considered in conjunction with, and as alternatives to, the construction of bypasses for towns and villages.”* It goes on to suggest investment criteria for network improvements including:

- **integration** - ensuring that all decisions are taken in the context of integrated transport policy
- **safety** - to improve safety for all road users
- **environmental impact** – protecting the built and natural environment (in the event of major highway works or improvements to existing routes, the Council will liaise with the Highways Agency or Highway Authority to ensure that surfaces which will transmit least noise will be used.)
- **accessibility** - improving access to everyday facilities for those without a car and reducing community severance

9.5.3 Whilst it is recognised that the building of additional road space may not always provide a solution, there will nevertheless be situations where there is little alternative. The Government advised¹⁶ *“Local plans ... should elaborate the detail of transport proposals where a particular preferred proposal has been identified at the regional or strategic level. They should also include proposals of a non-strategic nature as they relate to the development patterns proposed in the plan. Proposals should be limited to those on which work will commence during the lifetime of the plan, especially where land is required to be safeguarded for the proposals. Where the options for meeting particular transport requirements have already been evaluated at the regional or strategic level, consideration in the local plan process should normally be limited to detailed land use issues such as alignment.”*

POLICY TRAN4 PROTECTION OF LAND FOR IMPROVED TRANSPORT OR HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

Land identified as being required for improved transport or highway infrastructure, as shown on the Proposals Map, will be protected from development which would prejudice the implementation of the proposal.

¹⁵ Para 3.126, A New Deal For Transport, 1998, DTLR.

¹⁶ Para 5.21, PPG 12: Development Plans, 1999, DETR.

9.5.4 Policies relating to routes for major county highway schemes are included in the relevant site specific chapters 13-14. Land is identified on the Proposals Map for junction improvements on the C12 (Policy NA7): at the C128 Piddletrenthide junction; at the Cerne Abbas/ Piddletrenthide junction; Cerne Abbas north junction; Knapps Hill junction; and the A352 Middlemarsh junction. Land is safeguarded for the A354 Ridgeway to Littlemoor (Weymouth Relief Road – ‘Orange Route’) at Policy EA35. Schemes identified in the Plan are subject to regular review and other improvements may be identified as a result of changes in strategy, circumstance or network management. Such changes will be identified and progressed through the Local Transport Plan Review process. If a scheme identified requires the acquisition of land outside the highway, consultation will also take place with the landowners / occupiers affected at the detailed design stage.

9.6 Parking

9.6.1 Parking policies are a vital link in the process of moving towards sustainable development through integrating land use and transport policies. This overall message comes through in Government planning policy guidance (PPS6 and PPG13). It is, however, important to clearly distinguish between public off-street parking provision to serve town centres and parking guidelines for provision of spaces related to development proposals. The level of parking to be provided should reflect the need to promote sustainable travel choices and reduce reliance upon the car.

9.6.2 It is, however, necessary to ensure that adequate space is available clear of the highway for the parking of vehicles since, without adequate parking provision, the street environment can become less attractive through unsightly and potentially dangerous on-street parking, loss of capacity on public highways and congestion. Inadequate off-street parking can also impact on the viability and vitality of town and neighbourhood centres, especially where competing centres are free of parking constraints.

9.6.3 However, higher density development accompanied by lower parking provision (with appropriate on-street parking controls) can both release space for amenity uses or for further development and help to improve the pedestrian and cycling environment by reallocating road space within residential and shopping areas to pedestrians and cyclists¹⁷. Local planning authorities are advised to adopt reduced requirements for parking in locations which have good access to means of travel other than the private car. In relation to residential development, local planning authorities are advised to be flexible in the requirements for off-street parking spaces and reduce them, when appropriate, in order to provide quality and affordable high density development in areas of good access to other means of travel.

9.6.4 The District Council recognises the need to control parking within an area as environmentally and culturally sensitive as West Dorset. Whilst the government recognises the influence that the availability of car parking has on travel patterns, it also acknowledges that a balance needs to be struck between providing adequate parking and still encouraging alternative modes, like car sharing, and that for some journeys, particularly in rural areas, the car is likely to remain the only real option for travel. There will remain therefore a need for a certain level of car parking to enable people, who are realistically unable to make their journey any other way, to park without causing social or amenity problems.

17 Para. 2.1.8, Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice, 1998, DETR

- 9.6.5 The scope for reducing the parking depends on the type of land use, accessibility of the site, availability by non-car modes and client catchment area. The greatest scope for reducing parking demand is parking at the workplace, since this offers the greatest opportunity for tackling regular, peak-hour travel. This is a particular benefit where there is a relatively compact travel to work area, such as between Weymouth and Dorchester, and viable alternatives exist particularly to address the needs of internal commuters.
- 9.6.6 Minimum parking standards are no longer a requirement of development proposals and have been replaced with maximum parking standards for non-residential development. The move from minimum parking standards to maximum parking standards is an important factor in encouraging a shift to more sustainable travel patterns, in conjunction with public transport improvements and investment in pedestrian and cycle facilities. The revised standards relate to the introduction of a requirement for Travel Plans for new developments and will complement the existing requirements for Transport Assessments.
- 9.6.7 The District Council may allow developments which would otherwise fall short of the required guidelines for parking where there is good access to public transport, or where cycle / pedestrian links may help reduce the number of trips by car. Development in the central areas of Dorchester, Bridport, Sherborne, Lyme Regis and Beaminster may be particularly suited to reduced parking requirements. For these reasons, and in order to allow for circumstances associated with each development, it is intended that the guidelines will be applied with a degree of flexibility. The type of provision (on-street, on-plot or on a shared basis) will largely depend on the character and sensitivity of the area, the likelihood of parking exacerbating road traffic problems, and the potential problems which may arise from crime and vandalism.
- 9.6.8 The parking levels in Appendix 1 are the maximum for each land use category. Where the maximum is not provided, the developer will be required to show the scale of the journeys to the site and, if these journeys exceed proposed parking provision, how the resulting shortfall will be catered for. Possible solutions include a Travel Plan and/or the provision of a commuted sum for Council provided services, such as a contribution towards improvements for public car parks (e.g. improved lighting or security), construction of additional car parks, park and ride services or contributions to implement more frequent bus services.
- 9.6.9 The addition of tourist traffic, particularly during the summer months, can add to existing problems. The Council, in conjunction with local communities, Parish Councils and Dorset County Council, will consider ways to ameliorate the lack of public parking provision in the more rural villages, in conjunction with other measures such as on-street parking restrictions and environmental enhancement schemes to ease congestion and improve the appearance of the area. In order not to increase the reliance on the private car, it is intended that such schemes should be designed so as not to result in an overall increase in the amount of parking in any settlement.

POLICY TRAN5 PARKING PROVISION

All new development (including change of use and extensions) shall provide parking space within or adjacent to the site in accordance with the guidelines contained in Appendix I. In relation to major development proposals, contributions may be sought towards the introduction of on-street parking controls in the vicinity of the site, improved public transport including park and ride schemes, cycling or pedestrian facilities.

Parking provision made should be designed so that it does not unduly detract from, or dominate, the street scene.

9.7 Public Transport

- 9.7.1 The opportunity for the reduction in journeys by car will largely depend upon the relative juxtaposition between provision of transport and land uses and the effectiveness, efficiency and attractiveness of any alternative transport.
- 9.7.2 Major traffic generating development should include enhanced provision for public transport facilities to encourage its use. It is essential that adequate provision is agreed at an early stage of designing major developments to ensure that travel intensive land uses are located at sites which are well served by public transport¹⁸. The District Council may seek contributions towards public transport facilities where these are required to deal adequately with traffic generated by proposed developments. Such improvements could include: passenger information systems; new railway stations; park and ride facilities; bus / cycle / rail interchange facilities; bus lanes; changes to junction control or priorities; and new or subsidised public transport services.
- 9.7.3 Rail is a complementary element to road based public transport provision particularly in the east of the District. The local rail network has a role to play in meeting the transport needs of residents along those corridors served by rail routes. Rail can play an important part in tackling congestion by reducing the impact of car journeys particularly into urban areas.
- 9.7.4 The District and County Councils working with the Strategic Rail Authority, train operating companies, Network Rail, and other providers may seek contributions towards public transport facilities where these are required to deal with travel needs of development. Such facilities may include for example:
- physical improvements to rail stations
 - improvements to station security
 - facilities for disabled users
 - bus / cycling facilities at railway stations
 - development of bus/rail interchanges
 - bus lanes /changes to junction control
 - park and ride
 - provision of timetable and real time information

¹⁸ Transportation Policies J, M and N; Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Structure Plan (CSP 28), 2001.

- 9.7.5 In considering proposals for developments which are likely to generate significant levels of travel demand¹⁹, the District Council will require that provision is made by developers for direct access onto the public transport network. The pedestrian access from within the site to the public transport connection should be relatively direct and attractive to its potential users²⁰, and the public transport service should connect directly (with few intermediary stops) and frequently (at least a twice-daily service to allow travel-to-work) to at least one major town centre within or adjoining the District. As services are provided primarily on a commercial basis, in the event that an identified need for a service could not be provided commercially, the District Council, in consultation with the County Council, would consider if such a service should be subsidised.

POLICY TRAN6 PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION

Development proposals that are likely to generate significant²¹ levels of travel demand will only be permitted where:

- i) appropriate levels of direct public transport services exist or there is demonstrable potential for the development to be well served by public transport services;
- ii) the development has been designed to ensure that the existing or potential public transport routes lie within easy walking distance of the entire site²²;
- iii) new residential, commercial and industrial estate layouts will be designed to allow for the movement of or access to the public transport network.

There is no Policy TRAN7.

Public Transport Interchanges

- 9.7.6 Public transport interchanges are formal or informal locations where passengers are able to access and interconnect with various modes of public transport. This interface between travellers and the different forms of public transport include simple bus stops, bus stations, train stations, park and ride sites, airports and harbours.
- 9.7.7 The aim of any transport strategy must be to encourage greater use of public transport by providing comfortable, convenient and safe interchanges. These aims are to be achieved through the following local objectives:-
- i) to improve car parking facilities at railway stations.
 - ii) to improve bus, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure at public transport interchanges, for example through the provision of toilets, secure cycle parking, lockers, seating, shelters, changing/shower facilities and refreshments.
 - iii) to improve facilities and accessibility to key rural bus and coach stops.
 - iv) to enhance town centre bus interchanges in relation to accessibility of key facilities and to improve safety and security of passengers, particularly women and children.
 - v) to make better arrangements for interconnecting services at interchanges.
 - vi) to ensure there is publicity for interchange opportunities.

19 Development of sufficient quantum to require the submission of a Transport Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the IHT Guidelines for Transport Impact Assessment 1994 (ISBN 0 902 933 12 4) or subsequent revision and PPG13 Transport.

20 Paras. 3.89 - 3.90, A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone - The Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (Cm 3950), 1998, DETR recognises the role of street design in reducing fear about personal security for those walking to and from, and waiting for, public transport. It also notes that attention should be given to the design and layout of bus stations and their operation, particularly at night, into order to increase passenger security.

21 Development of sufficient quantum to require the submission of a Transport Assessment in accordance with the requirements of the IHT Guidelines for Transport Impact Assessment (ISBN 0902933124) or subsequent revision and PPG13 Transport.

22 Annex A, Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG 10), 2001, DTLR.

9.7.8 Policy TRAN 13 refers to the provision and improvement of transport infrastructure.

9.8 Cyclists and Pedestrians

9.8.1 Cycling is cheap, healthy, efficient and can be enjoyable. Moreover, it can make a significant contribution towards establishing a more sustainable transport system to benefit everyone. However, cycling use in the District is low; only 2% of all trips are made by bicycle, with 5% for journeys to work. Travel to school surveys have indicated that around 2% of journeys to school are made by bicycle.

9.8.2 The Government's White Paper has restated the important contribution cycling can make in an integrated transport system²³. It has endorsed the targets and aspirations set out in the National Cycling Strategy (NCS) which set targets for doubling the number of cycle trips (on 1996 figures) by the end of 2002 and quadrupling trips by 2012.

9.8.3 The Government suggests that the design and layout of development should be made safe, attractive and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists²⁴. Regional Planning Guidance states that "development plans should promote the provision of and enhancement of networks for walking, cycling and public transport and ensure that development which generates large amounts of movement is well served by sustainable transport networks"²⁵.

9.8.4 The District Council recognises that a substantial improvement in pedestrian routes is an essential element of reducing the use of the car in urban areas. It also wishes to see improvements to the cycle network, to encourage cycling as an alternative means of transport.

9.8.5 The strategy to increase the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot or bicycle largely comprises ensuring that development is concentrated within settlements which have the facilities to cater for the local population, and that uses are mixed within these areas. In addition to this strategy, the Council seeks to maintain and, where possible, improve the pedestrian and cyclist environment, in terms of:

- safety;
- links to homes, work and community facilities;
- signing; and
- cycle parking and hire facilities.

9.8.6 One of the particular issues for West Dorset is its rural and topographic characteristics. Whilst there are opportunities to further develop leisure cycling in the rural area, it is in the Weymouth/Chickerell area and the market towns where there is the biggest potential for increases in cycle usage.

²³ A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone, 1998, DETR.

²⁴ Para. 3.4, A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone - The Government's White Paper on the Future of Transport (Cm 3950), 1998, DETR.

²⁵ Policy V1S 2, Regional Planning Guidance for the South West, (RPG 10), 2001, DTLR

9.8.7 Bad design of layouts, physical barriers, poorly repaired surfaces, cluttered paths and vulnerability to accidents with other road users all act as deterrents to pedestrians and cyclists. These deterrents are further exacerbated by the dispersal of land uses. If these concerns can be suitably addressed, there is considerable scope for many more journeys currently undertaken by car to transfer to walking and cycling²⁶. In general, footpaths and alleyways should be wide, clear of hiding places, well lit and within view of passers-by and frontage development. Unrestricted access to the rear of properties by way of a footpath or alleyway should generally be avoided.

9.8.8 The improvement of the pedestrian and cyclist environment includes the provision of new dedicated routes and facilities for cyclists at their destination. There are two routes of the National Cycleway Network (NCN)²⁷ crossing West Dorset. A number of improvements or additions to these have been identified that would benefit the recreational side of cycle provision, both within and between the towns, particularly in terms of green travel/sustainable tourism, these are:

- Linking NCN route 2 to Lyme Regis
- Linking NCN route 2 to Charmouth
- Pursuing NCN route 2 from Dorchester eastwards to link in with Purbeck District and railway stations at Wool and Wareham.

9.8.9 Arguably however, a greater increase in cycling can be achieved by improving facilities in the market and seaside towns. Within the towns the following areas have been identified:

Dorchester

- implementation of the Dorchester Transport and Environment Plan
- completion of the Safe Routes to School Traffic Calming, Coburg Road (Dorchester Middle School, Thomas Hardy School and Leisure Centre)
- Crossways to West Stafford Cycleway
- investigate link between Dorchester and Kingston Maurward College
- investigate improving link to Martinstown (part of NCN2)
- off-road link to Charlton Down

Bridport

- investigate continuing cycleway along Sea Road North to link into Colfox School
- St Mary's Playing Field Cycleway (NCN2 spur) – lighting scheme
- completing the link from Bridport to West Bay (NCN2 spur)
- investigate link between Bridport and Chideock
- investigate pedestrian/cycle bridge link from North Allington to Pymore Road
- improved links between Skilling and town centre

²⁶ Three-quarters of all journeys are under 5 miles in length: Transport Statistics Report: National Travel Survey, 1991, DoT.

²⁷ A major project initiated by Sustrans, the civil engineering charity, comprising 10,000 miles of continuous cycle routes passing through most major towns and cities in the UK.

Sherborne

- Investigate local link from west of town into town centre
- A30 Sherborne to Milborne port cycleway

Beaminster

- Investigate improved links to Beaminster School

Chickerell

- Investigate improved links within settlement and to College / Industrial Estates.

As indicated in paragraph 9.5.4, alternative provision may be made as a result of changes in development proposals, review, circumstance or strategy.

- 9.8.10 The Council will seek to ensure that, where appropriate, provision is made for pedestrian and cycle facilities to encourage journeys on foot and by bicycle to local facilities. Where appropriate, developers should provide on-site footpaths, bridleways and cycleways to the standards specified in Dorset County Council's Design Guide. The County Council may also seek contributions towards off-site improvements. The District Council's parking guidelines include details on the amount of cycle parking facilities considered appropriate to cater for the travel demands of new development. These are set out in Appendix 1 of the Local Plan.

POLICY TRAN8 CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

All new development will be expected to take account of the needs of cyclists and pedestrians either by the direct provision, or by contribution to new routes or links to existing routes within or adjoining a settlement. Such routes should provide a safe, convenient, direct and attractive environment to the cyclist or pedestrian. Where conditions allow, a choice of routes should be provided to increase the trip potential.

There is no Policy TRAN9.

POLICY TRAN10 LOSS OF PEDESTRIAN OR CYCLE ROUTES

Development which would result in the loss of an existing pedestrian or cycle route or public right of way will only be permitted where a replacement pedestrian route or public right of way would be provided which would maintain the existing network of routes and which would be safe, direct and attractive to pedestrians.

POLICY TRAN11 CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES

Development for non-residential uses will be granted provided there is adequate, secure cycle parking facilities, having regard to the Council's parking guidelines contained in Appendix 1.

- 9.8.11 There are opportunities within the District for the re-use of disused railway tracks for recreational uses. Such tracks pass through attractive countryside and might potentially be used for footways and cycleways which could provide safer alternative routes than the existing highway network and facilitate increased access to the countryside. The District Council will explore opportunities for the re-use of disused railway tracks for recreational uses, including investigating the potential of the former Maiden Newton-Bridport line.

9.9 Pre-Requisites to Development

Travel Plans

- 9.9.1 PPG13 seeks to promote the widespread use of travel plans in order to deliver sustainable transport objectives. This approach is reflected in RPG10, the Adopted Structure Plan and Dorset County Council's Development Related Travel Plan SPG.
- 9.9.2 PPG13 (para.88) sets out a wide range of sustainable travel objectives for travel plans including reductions in car usage, increased use of public transport, walking and cycling, reduced traffic speeds, improved road safety and personal security and more environmentally friendly delivery and freight movements. PPG13 (para.89) expects travel plans to be submitted alongside planning applications which are likely to have significant transport implications.

POLICY TRAN12 TRAVEL PLANS

Development likely to have significant transport implications should provide a travel plan demonstrating practical measures for achieving sustainable transport objectives.

Contributions to Costs of Providing or Improving Transport Infrastructure

- 9.9.3 Development, particularly if it is large scale, may potentially reduce the efficiency of the road network and result in congestion and an unacceptable risk to road safety (see Policy AH14, Road Safety). In some cases, improvement works or new facilities can resolve these potential problems, or public transport provision (in accordance with Policy TRAN6) may help. The Highway Authority (Dorset County Council) will expect developers to provide the necessary infrastructure for a development in line with guidance on planning obligations contained in Circular 5/2005 and PPG13.
- 9.9.4 Developers will have the responsibility of demonstrating to the Highway Authority that the traffic generated by their development can be accommodated on the existing highway network. Where it is anticipated that development will adversely affect the existing movement of traffic and pedestrians, the Highway Authority will require appropriate improvements to the highway network to be carried out to enable the development and associated highway network to function satisfactorily. Developers will be expected to negotiate with the County Council (or in the case of the trunk road network, the Highways Agency) for the provision of such infrastructure, improvements to the pedestrian and cycle networks, and the provision of any necessary environmental mitigation measures. This may include off-site works and / or travel plans to enable the development to proceed. The developer may be required to enter into an agreement for the provision or contribution towards the costs of necessary improvements²⁸. For smaller development, pro-rata contributions may also be sought. The District Council is developing a policy on planning obligations.

²⁸ Either a Section 106 (in the case of the local road network) or a Section 278 Agreement (in the case of the trunk road network) under the Highways Act 1980, in accordance with current Government advice.

POLICY TRAN13 CONTRIBUTIONS TO COSTS OF PROVIDING OR IMPROVING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Development will not be permitted unless adequate transport infrastructure to serve that development is available or can be provided, including public transport, facilities to encourage integrated travel, transport interchanges and facilities, highways, cycleways and pedestrian routes.

Where development or redevelopment would have a significant adverse impact on traffic flows and safety, development will not be permitted unless acceptable remedial measures form part of the proposal, or contributions towards the whole or part of the cost of such measures are made. Any contributions sought will be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development.