

CHAPTER 9

TRANSPORT

9) TRANSPORT

9.0 INTRODUCTION

9.0.1 Transport policy is the responsibility of Durham County Council. The District can however influence the issues of the Highway Authority through its own proposals. Both the County and the District Council recognise that integrated transportation and planning can make great improvements to safety and amenity whilst allowing the efficient movement of people and goods.

9.0.2 The Council supports the County Durham Local Transport Plan and has prepared a statement which details this support and the linkage to the Teesdale Rural Transport Partnership and the Council's emerging policies in relation to Local Agenda 21 and community safety.

9.1 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

9.1.1 Despite improvements in part of the primary network including A66 and A1 (M) there are still problems of traffic movement from east to west across the District, in particular there are problems at Barnard Castle due to the weight restriction on the County Bridge. Any future by-pass of Barnard Castle would result in an increase of traffic, especially heavy goods vehicles, with the resulting pressure on other settlements on the east to west routes.

9.2 TRAFFIC CALMING

9.2.1 The increase in traffic through the district often leads to pedestrian/vehicular conflict. In some instances traffic calming techniques can reduce both vehicular movements and speed. Such schemes will be introduced as they are advanced by Durham County Council, the Highway Authority.

9.3 POLICY OBJECTIVES

9.3.1 The policies in the plan will attempt to secure the following objectives:

- ◆ To seek the safe and efficient use of the existing communication network.
- ◆ To promote improvements to the Highway Network especially to resolve existing highway problems, to achieve environmental improvements in towns and villages, and to open up new land for industrial and housing development.
- ◆ To support the County Council's efforts to ensure the continuing provision of a public transport system throughout the district.
- ◆ To provide adequate and suitable parking areas in all parts of the district.
- ◆ To locate significant new development in a way which will reduce the demand for movement and thus reduce reliance on private cars.
- ◆ To reduce the adverse environmental impact of motorised travel
- ◆ To promote walking and cycling as realistic alternatives to car borne travel

9.4 POLICIES

9.4.1 HIGHWAY PROPOSALS

9.4.2 The A688 and A67 provide important links between the A1 (M) and A66 (Trunk Road) and are therefore important in the transport of people and goods. At present the main river crossing on this route is the County Bridge at Barnard Castle, which is an Ancient Monument and has a camera monitored weight limit. The Barnard Castle Bypass was adopted by Durham County Council in the Structure Plan, the Corridor of Interest as shown on the Proposals Map has been the subject of public consultation. In 1987 public consultation took place in respect of possible options to improve the environment of Barnard Castle whilst still maintaining a strategic route for lorries along the A688/A67 to reduce mileage from central County Durham to the North West of England. The preferred option was the provision of a by pass to the North and West of the town. The provision of the bypass is contained within the Durham County Structure Plan as an improvement to the strategic road network and is included within the draft Durham County Local Transport Plan as a medium term priority, based on "New Approach to Appraisal" (NATA) methodology. When the time-scale for implementation is clearer more detailed work will be carried out at which time it may be appropriate also to re-consider aspects of the general alignment in the light of changes in circumstances since the original consultation process as well as concerns about specific environmental considerations.

9.4.3 The construction of a bypass and building of a new river crossing are important to the economic regeneration of the county, but it may also increase traffic problems for West Auckland and Staindrop.

9.4.4 The A68 is a busy transport route which puts pressure on the areas of West Auckland/Toft Hill. The bypass of these settlements should secure a reduction of through traffic and of industrial traffic, to the obvious benefits of the residents of these settlements.

POLICY T1

LAND WILL BE SAFEGUARDED FROM DEVELOPMENT FOR THE FOLLOWING ROUTES AS IDENTIFIED IN THE PROPOSAL MAP:

A) A67/A688 BARNARD CASTLE BYPASS

B) A688/A68 WEST AUCKLAND BYPASS

C) A68 TOFT HILL BYPASS

9.5. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND PARKING

9.5.1 Increased reliance on the motor car as a means of personal transport has resulted in vehicles becoming a more intrusive factor in the environment, both when moving and parked.

Although some parking is normally required to ensure the effective operation of a development, excessive parking provision can encourage dependency on the private car and waste development land. In examining proposals, the Council will expect developers to comply with the maximum parking standards set out in Appendix 2.

POLICY T2

CAR PARKING PROVISION IN NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE LIMITED TO THAT NECESSARY TO ENSURE THE SAFE AND EFFICIENT OPERATION OF THE SITE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STANDARDS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 2, EXCEPT IN AREAS WHERE THE PROVISIONS OF POLICY T3 APPLY.

9.5.2 The upgrading of roads and parking is not always an appropriate form of action, particularly where the local environment is sensitive to change.

9.5.3 Barnard Castle town centre area is also defined as a central parking zone.

POLICY T3

WHERE NEW DEVELOPMENT IS PROPOSED IN THE TOWN CENTRE AREA OF BARNARD CASTLE, OR WILL INVOLVE THE CHANGE OF USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS PARKING PROVISION WILL BE ASSESSED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:-

- A) THE NUMBER OF PARKING SPACES WHICH CAN BE PROVIDED;**
- B) THE PROXIMITY OF EXISTING PUBLIC CAR PARKING PROVISION;**
- C) THE ROAD SAFETY IMPLICATIONS OF A LEANER PARKING REQUIREMENT;**
- D) THE MERITS OF THE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE HISTORIC SETTING**

9.5.4 The impact of motor vehicles on the historic parts of settlements and commercial and residential areas throughout the District, has become increasingly detrimental to amenity and public safety. The Council will therefore seek traffic calming measures where appropriate. For Barnard Castle town centre a Traffic Management Working Group operates. This involves the Council, Durham County Council as highway authority and the local community, and addresses issues of traffic management giving consideration to the implications for the physical environment.

POLICY T4

ROADS IN SETTLEMENTS IN THE DISTRICT WHERE TRAFFIC SPEEDS ARE SHOWN TO BE A PROBLEM WILL BE IDENTIFIED, AND THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO IMPLEMENT TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES TO REDUCE TRAFFIC SPEEDS AND SECURE A SAFER ENVIRONMENT.

9.6 PUBLIC PARKING IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES.

9.6.1 Many villages are facing parking problems from the increase in car ownership combined with the shortage of parking in close knit building groups and an increase in visitors, mainly day visitors. The problems faced are often the destruction of the village green by parking and manoeuvring of vehicles. The first cause of the problem is difficult to solve as residents do not like parking in areas remote from their dwelling house. Visitors however are more inclined to use car parking facilities where provided. Parking in Barnard Castle and Middleton is obviously important for the tourist trade in the District. As such efforts will be made to achieve provision of car and coach parking in these settlements. Middleton in Teesdale suffers from problems with coach parking which can only be alleviated by the construction of adequate parking facilities.

9.6.2 The allocated land for car parking in Barnard Castle is close to the defined town centre, has satisfactory highways access and good access on foot to the town centre shopping area and the permitted foodstore site in particular. Development of the allocated land will be part of a wider programme of town centre parking management, including improvements to be carried out to existing car parks as a result of a Section 106 Agreement in respect of the permitted town centre supermarket development. Levels of town centre car parking will be kept under review in the light of national and structure plan policy aimed at reducing private car use, and improvements resulting from Local Transport Plan initiatives.

POLICY T5

LAND AT THE SMITHS GROVE WORKS, BARNARD CASTLE IS ALLOCATED FOR CAR PARKING AND LAND AT BRIDGE STREET, MIDDLETON-IN-TEESDALE IS ALLOCATED FOR CAR/COACH PARKING, BOTH AS SHOWN ON THE INSET PROPOSALS MAPS. THE PARKING AREA AT MIDDLETON-IN-TEESDALE WILL BE PROVIDED IN ASSOCIATION WITH HOUSING DEVELOPMENT UNDER POLICY H2.

POLICY T6

IN VILLAGES WHERE INDISCRIMINATE CAR PARKING OR MANOEUVRING IS CAUSING DAMAGE TO IMPORTANT GRASSED AREAS, DETAILED STUDIES WILL BE CARRIED OUT TO ESTABLISH WHETHER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS COULD BE PRACTICAL AND ENVIRONMENTALLY BENEFICIAL SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEM:

A) CREATION OF COMMUNAL PARKING AREAS

B) DEFENCE OF VILLAGE GREENS AND SIMILAR SPACES THROUGH THE USE OF KERBS AND BOLLARDS WHERE THIS IS LEGALLY PERMISSIBLE AND SUBJECT TO ANY NECESSARY CONSENTS BEING OBTAINED IN RELATION TO THE PROPOSED WORKS.

9.7 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

9.7.1 Public transport is still an important mode of transport especially in rural areas. The Council are attempting to support public transport provision by locating major future housing and industrial development on or close to public transport routes to help to maintain services as well as reducing the need for car journeys. Teesdale District will support the County Council in its role of securing and encouraging the provision of public transport services and infrastructure.

POLICY T7

THE COUNCIL WILL SUPPORT DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL IN ITS ROLE OF SECURING AND ENCOURAGING THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN TEESDALE IN PARTICULAR THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CRITERION U OF POLICY GD1 AND THROUGH ITS POLICIES RELATING TO THE LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENTS.

9.8 CYCLING

9.8.1 Cycling is an environmentally sustainable form of development which has a number of benefits. Cycling in the District is primarily on a recreational basis as distance often precludes journeys to work, although the development of a settlement pattern where places of employment are located near residential areas may increase this element. Cycling should be encouraged for environmental, health and economic reasons as there is potential for tourist projects based on cycling. Policy GD1(T) requires priority to be given to cyclists on development sites with the provision of links to cycle way networks and cycle parking where practical.

9.8.2 Defined cycle routes are shown on the proposals map. There are a number of disused railway lines in the district which would be ideally suited for the provision of further cycle ways and footpaths.

POLICY T8

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL IN CONJUNCTION WITH DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE CYCLING IN THE DISTRICT. THE PROVISION OF OFF-ROAD CYCLE ROUTES WILL BE PURSUED.

9.8.3 In order to encourage the use of cycles as a mode of transport there needs to be provision for secure storage of cycles to gain public confidence in their use.

POLICY T9

THROUGH PLANNING CONDITIONS AND PLANNING AGREEMENTS, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO PROVIDE SECURE CYCLE PARKING FACILITIES IN BARNARD CASTLE TOWN CENTRE, IN ALL AREAS CONNECTED WITH CYCLE ROUTES AND ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES.