

Appendix 9 - Transport and Connections

12.0 High quality connections, both physical by road, rail, bus, walking, cycling; or digital are vital to the District's future sustainability, economic prosperity and social inclusiveness. These connections provide access to education, employment, business, retail and leisure opportunities and can support sustainable lifestyles and opportunities.

12.1 The Local Plan sets out to make sure that new development is located in the right places to benefit from access by a variety of sustainable transport modes. However, facilitating sustainable economic growth and supporting the growth needed in the District also requires development of transport networks and connections to ensure that they provide an effective, efficient and high quality network with efficient public transport, ~~safe, accessible and attractive~~ routes for pedestrians and cyclists, an efficient road network and modern digital infrastructure.

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Sustainable Transport and Travel

12.2 Three Rivers is well served by communication links. However, car ownership levels are high and car usage increasingly dominates patterns of movement in the District. Traffic levels in the District are forecast to grow by 15.6% by 2031 and there are existing local congestion problems. Increased congestion and car use could undermine the economic growth of the District and harm the quality of the environment and social well-being.

12.3 An efficient, comprehensive and sustainable transport system is an essential element in supporting the District's economic competitiveness, meeting targets for reducing CO2 emissions and enabling the delivery of sustainable development. Promoting sustainable transport modes will help re-balance the focus to those modes that have lower emissions and contribute to creating a higher quality environment across the District.

12.4 Hertfordshire County Council will produce a Growth and Transport Plan (GTP) for South West Hertfordshire, which aims to identify the transport interventions that will be needed to support and help facilitate sustainable development within the South West Hertfordshire area, including in Three Rivers.

12.5 While Three Rivers District is not responsible for the transport network, the location of new development may have a significant impact on transport and travel and the travel choices made.

12.6 The Spatial Strategy seeks to direct development to the areas with greatest access to public transport, services and facilities, which should contribute to reducing the need to travel and journey lengths, and enable the use of public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to the car.

12.7 The Council is also working with Hertfordshire County Council, ~~National Highways and other~~ transport providers to provide a co-ordinated and enhanced transport system which improves connectivity and transport services to and between settlements within Three Rivers, to town centres in surrounding areas, and to London.

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Preferred Policy Option 26 Sustainable Transport and Travel

- 1) New development must contribute to the delivery of an integrated, accessible and safe transport system, maximising the use of the sustainable transport modes of walking, cycling

and the use of public transport. Particular regard shall be given to making appropriate connections to existing services and facilities that ensure the residents in the development can walk or cycle to those services and facilities both safely and easily. Development that maximises the use of public transport to the fullest use possible will be supported.

- 2) Proposals for development will need to have regard to the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule at Appendix XX and any subsequent updates which identify the key infrastructure requirements on which the delivery of the Plan depends. Provision of suitable access and transport infrastructure and services will be achieved through direct improvements and/or schemes funded through Section 106 contributions or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to address impacts of new development.
- 3) The transfer of road freight to railways and canals in the District will be supported in principle, subject to the provision of a full Transport Assessment and compliance with other relevant local, regional or national policies, including an assessment of impacts on the environment and amenity and prior discussion with Canal and River Trust.

Development Proposals

- 4) New development should integrate means of travel and minimise the impacts of travel by motor vehicle on the District by maximising where relevant:
 - a) The provision of high-quality, safe and direct walking and cycling routes within a permeable site layout, with priority over vehicular traffic, that facilitates and encourages short distance trips by walking and cycling;
 - b) The provision of sufficient secure, accessible and convenient cycle parking;
 - c) Enhancement of existing cycle and walking routes in the area to local facilities, services, bus stops and railway stations, as well as towpaths including enhancements of the links to and from the Grand Union Canal towpath;
 - d) The provision and improvement of public transport access including layouts to enable convenient access for buses, bus priority where possible and accessible bus stops with high quality infrastructure;
 - e) Opportunities for taxi ranks with charging points where there is a demonstrated need arising from new developments including transport hubs where demand would be high, such as station forecourts, and town centres.
- 5) Development proposals should demonstrate that:
 - a) It provides a safe and adequate means of access;
 - b) It will maintain the safe operation and the performance of the local road networks and the Strategic Road Network;
 - c) It is appropriate in scale to existing transport infrastructure, including public transport and, where necessary, infrastructure can be improved with provision for public transport as part of a scheme, and/or through contributions;
 - d) It is integrated with the wider network of transport routes, including public rights of way and cycle paths where appropriate;

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e) It makes adequate provision for all users, including car and other vehicle parking, giving priority to people with mobility difficulties, pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, and to low and ultra-low emission vehicles including suitable infrastructure for charging points;

6) Development generating a significant amount of movement must be supported by a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement and a Travel Plan for prospective residents, employees or users in accordance with the Local Validation Checklist. The Assessment/Statement should fully assess the impact of the proposal on transport taking into account the cumulative impacts of permitted developments and allocated sites, and detail any measures to be taken to mitigate adverse impacts taking into consideration relevant guidance available from Hertfordshire County Council.

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What you told us

- 12.8 As part of the Issues and options consultation you told us that it was important to reduce car dependency by locating development in sustainable locations near existing services and facilities and that development is designed to enable the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- 12.9 Many respondents highlighted the need for improved transport links and alternative/ sustainable modes of transport within suggested new developments. There was also concern raised at many areas of the current transport network often being at capacity and that policies should encourage and enable shorter journeys to be made by sustainable means, including by walking and cycling and there would need to be careful consideration of reducing the need to travel and maximising sustainable transport use within the District.

Why is this the Preferred Policy Option?

- 12.10 Transport has a range of impacts on the environment. As well as the land take for provision of transport infrastructure, it is a major source of carbon dioxide and of emissions affecting air quality in the District, with consequences for the health and quality of life of communities.
- 12.11 The NPPF requires that developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised. It also states that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and that opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.
- 12.12 Sustainable modes of travel are defined within the NPPF as any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, low and ultra-low emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.
- 12.13 The Spatial Strategy seeks to focus growth to locations which are or can be made sustainable to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. Complementing this, there is a need for all individual proposals for development to maximise opportunities to support and integrate sustainable travel and to manage and mitigate transport impacts to ensure that safe and suitable access will be provided for all users and that significant impacts of development will be limited.
- 12.14 All opportunities to minimise the impacts of transport on the environment through reducing the need to travel and promoting and encouraging the use of alternative more sustainable modes of transport must be taken as part of proposals for development, unless there is robust justification as to why this is not possible. **It is recognised that both fossil-fuelled vehicles and low-**

emissions/electric vehicles both contribute to congestion, they make differential contributions to air pollution, noise pollution and other environmental harms.

12.15 New development proposals should incorporate the Transport User Hierarchy as set out in Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 2018 – 2031 into the design of any scheme. The development of any transport strategy should consider in the following order:

- Opportunities to reduce travel demand and the need to travel
- Vulnerable road user needs (such as pedestrians and cyclists)
- Passenger transport user needs
- Powered two wheeler (mopeds and motorbikes) user needs
- Other motor vehicle user needs

12.16 Supporting a safe and pleasant walking environment requires prioritisation of pedestrians at the top of the road user hierarchy and improvements to pedestrian safety in existing areas. Developments must incorporate high quality pedestrian routes that promote walking as an attractive, convenient, safe and pleasant mode of transport and that connect in networks and to the surrounding area taking into account existing and likely desire lines. Adequate wayfinding is also important to help to incentivise walking.

12.17 Cycling is also an essential component of sustainability and the support of healthy lifestyles, as well as providing an affordable means of access to local destinations and opportunity for leisure and recreation. To encourage and support cycling, developments should connect to, and further develop and enhance the existing network of cycle routes of different types (on-road and off-road), including improvements to crossing facilities as well as the routes themselves. Providing sufficient, convenient and secure cycle parking, with a particular priority at key destinations such as town centres and railway stations is also important, as well as end-of-trip facilities for cyclists. Homes or communal secure areas should provide sufficient space for cycle parking such that lack of cycle storage is not a barrier to cycling and cycle ownership and use.

12.18 The Council will also support initiatives to increase access to bicycles through cycle loan and hire opportunities subject to consideration of any associated facilities against other policies and objectives of the Local Plan.

12.19 Training and/or travel behaviour initiatives to support the take up of cycling will also be supported.

12.20 The Council will work with partners including Hertfordshire County Council and bus and rail operators to implement measures to give buses priority over other vehicles; to create and enhance the public realm around rail stations to improve the user experience and interchange; to develop the network to meet travel needs in the area; and to ensure that bus stops and bus stopping areas are well located and that they are designed to be accessible and comfortable for all. New development must also make provision for public transport where this is appropriate taking into account of the scale and nature of a development, including for example through layouts which enable access for buses and provision of covered waiting facilities and accessible bus stops with high quality infrastructure. Relevant guidance is available in HCC's Intalink Bus Strategy and the Rail Strategy.

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12.21 Land within the designated HS2 safeguarding area will be protected in accordance with advice from HS2 Ltd 12.22 In addition to supporting sustainable modes of travel, where new development comes forward, it must ensure that access arrangements are safe and do not result in danger or inconvenience to other users of the highway, including as a consequence of traffic generation on

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both the local road network and the Strategic Road Network which comprises the motorways and some A roads. Any impacts on the SRN will need to be identified and mitigated as far as reasonably possible. Appropriate provision for parking should also be made in accordance with the preferred policy on parking standards. The Place and Movement Design Guide and Travel Plan Guidance sets out criteria for production of Travel Plans can be viewed with the following link:
www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/travelplans

12.23 The Council will work in partnership with Canal and River Trust in relation to integrating the canal corridor into adjacent development and creating / strengthening links to other areas of open space. This could include improvements to the existing towpath, improving signage and creating circular walks or heritage trails. Canal Trust will be consulted as particular working practices and frequency required, costs, management would be key to determining overall suitability of any proposals for freight on the waterway.

Alternative options considered

12.24 As part of the Issues and Options consultation four options were put forward to include:

- Ensure that all new development is designed to enable the use of sustainable modes of transport where possible
- Reduce the need to travel by locating housing development near existing services/facilities
- Reduce the need to travel by providing services/facilities within settlements
- Ensure new development provides services/facilities, along with improved transport links

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Question 26

**Do you think the Preferred Policy Option for Sustainable Transport and Travel is the right approach? If not please identify how the option could be changed.
Should we have considered alternative options? If yes, please explain.**