

Chapter 12

Promoting and Delivering Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure



Guided Bus Stop, Histon, South Cambridgeshire

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- 12.1 Transport provides a key element in achieving sustainable development. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable modes; walking, cycling and public transport, in order to provide people with a real choice about how they travel. Cambridgeshire County Council, as the local transport authority, is responsible for producing the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP) which seeks to address existing transport challenges as well the needs generated by new development, and plan for the delivery of new transport infrastructure, such as road improvements.
- 12.2 In parallel with this issues and options consultation, Cambridgeshire County Council is consulting on a new Transport Strategy for Cambridge and the surrounding area. Work on the strategy is at an early stage and is being undertaken alongside the development of the new Local Plan and Cambridge City Council's new Local Plan. The aim is to co-ordinate. There will be a series of joint exhibitions with the County Council and people can make their views known at these or online at:
<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/tscsc>
- 12.3 The Local Plan can have a significant impact on transport. It can directly influence where and how development takes place, ensuring that distances and links between homes and employment, education, health, shopping, leisure and other services and facilities, are practical. The Local Plan can also ensure development mitigates its traffic impacts. This can include measures designed to encourage people to make sustainable travel choices, such as car clubs, car sharing, electric charging points, and provision of cycle lanes and parking. The Local Plan can ensure that development is designed to promote road safety, and to create places where walking and cycling have priority over motorised traffic, so that people feel safe.
- 12.4 South Cambridgeshire is located at the crossroads of the M11 / A14 roads and has direct rail access to London and Stansted Airport. The A14 is a major east / west route linking the east coast ports with the Midlands and the north, and carries considerable international freight traffic. The A14 is also a key route for local and regional commuter, business and freight traffic and, like some other major routes, has high traffic flows and congestion, particularly around Cambridge, and high levels of accidents. In July the Government announced a range of options it is exploring to relieve congestion on the route.
- 12.5 There are a number of major road corridors between the market towns and Cambridge, and villages located along these routes tend to be well served by public transport and cycling infrastructure. Away from these corridors, rural parts of the district are more isolated. In these areas Community Transport is particularly important, and the Council has adopted a Community Transport Strategy to help coordinate and develop services. A recent significant improvement to public transport is the Guided Busway between Cambridge and St. Ives. It provides services to a number of villages as well as the planned new town at Northstowe. This will also link to the planned new railway station at Chesterton on the edge of Cambridge.

Key Facts:

- There are high levels of congestion on radial routes into Cambridge at peak times.
- Average commuting distances have increased (10.2 miles in 2010 compared to 8.1 miles in 2009), and 62% of journeys are by car or van.
- High levels of traffic on the A14 and radial routes into Cambridge at peak times.
- Good public transport services in larger villages, but limited services in many smaller villages away from transport corridors.
- Cycling levels are higher than the national average.

Planning for Sustainable Travel

12.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that plans and decisions ensure 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. The development strategy, addressed in Chapter 3: Development Needs, considers the development needs of the district, and options regarding where that development should be focused. Achieving sustainable transport has been a key consideration influencing the strategy, and the identification of site options for allocation in the Local Plan. Transport impacts of individual developments will still need to be considered at the planning application stage.

Issue 97: Planning for Sustainable Travel

The Local Plan needs to ensure the transport impacts of developments are fully considered when considering proposals. The following principles should be developed into policies in the Local Plan:

- Developments should not be approved that are likely to give a significant increase in travel demands, unless the site has or can provide sufficient standard of accessibility, offers an appropriate level of travel choice by walking, cycling or public transport.
- Developments should be expected to address the transport issues they generate, such as through improvements to provide safe road access, improvements to the road, footway or cycleway network, or to address environmental impacts such as noise or air quality. This could be through the direct provision of transport infrastructure through the development, or financial contributions through planning obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), to address transport infrastructure in the wider area.

- Development can provide opportunities to encourage sustainable travel, and, in particular, increase the use of non-car modes (public transport, walking and cycling), by providing safe, direct routes that offer people real travel choice for some or all of their journey. Developers should be expected to demonstrate they have maximised opportunities to integrate travel modes, and access by non-motorised modes.
- New cycle and walking routes should connect to existing networks, strengthening connections between clusters of villages, and Northstowe, Cambridge, and market towns.
- In a rural area like South Cambridgeshire, the wider Rights of Way network provides an important resource for walkers, and in some cases, for cyclists and horse riders. As well as providing links between villages, they offer leisure and recreation routes improving access to the surrounding countryside as part of a healthy lifestyle. Developments should protect such routes, and may provide opportunities for improvement to the network.

Question 97:

Should the Local Plan include the principles regarding sustainable travel in outlined in Issue 97, and are there any additional issues that should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

- 12.7 Transport Assessments and Travel Plans are required from developers to explore the transport impacts of their proposals, how they will be addressed, and how sustainable travel will be delivered in the long term. National guidance refers to the requirement applying to developments which generate ‘significant amounts of movement’. For smaller developments with lower impacts, a simpler ‘Transport Statement’ is required.
- 12.8 Given the existing constraints on parts of the transport network even small levels of additional traffic could have a significant impact in some locations, therefore an option could be to retain a general threshold for major development when a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required, but require that where appropriate they may also be sought on smaller developments. This could include developments in particularly congested locations and/or generating larger numbers of trips, where there are particular local travel problems, or affecting Air Quality Management Areas.

Issue 98: Transport Assessments and Travel Plans

Transport Assessments and Travel Plans could be required for:

- major developments (over 20 dwellings or 0.5ha. for residential development and over 1,000m² or 1 ha. for other development) and
- smaller developments where they are:
 - in particularly congested locations; and/or
 - generating larger numbers of trips;
 - where there are particular local travel problems; or
 - affecting Air Quality Management Areas.
- Other smaller developments would continue to provide a Transport Statement.

Question 98:

A: Should the Local Plan continue to require ‘major developments’ to produce a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan, as well as smaller developments with particular transport implications?

B: Should an alternative threshold be used, if so what, and why?

Please provide any comments.

Car Parking

- 12.9 The provision of car parking has a significant influence on the design of development, and the amenity of its eventual occupiers.
- 12.10 Historically, national policy sought to restrict the level of car parking provision in new development, imposing maximum car parking standards. This was considered to be a tool for minimising car use as part of a comprehensive approach to encouraging use of more sustainable modes of travel, such as public transport, cycling and walking. However, car ownership and car use should not be confused as being the same. Where good convenient pedestrian or cycle routes, or public transport, facilities are provided, people may choose to use those in preference to driving for regular journeys. They are still very likely to own a car for convenient use for other journeys.

Car Parking Standards

- 12.11 Changes to government guidance mean there is now greater flexibility on how councils address parking in local plans.
- 12.12 The Council's current plan reflects previous national policy and includes a set of maximum standards, indicating the maximum number of spaces per house allowed in a development. The Council could continue this approach, which could help promote more sustainable travel choice, but it could also mean insufficient parking where ownership is high, particularly in more remote parts of the district. This can result in spill-over parking in inappropriate and sometimes dangerous locations, causing nuisance and/or hazard to other road users. In particular, comments made to the Council about new developments are often that the road widths are too narrow and yet on-street parking takes place anyway and causes problems for other road users.
- 12.13 Whilst the way we use our cars may be becoming both more restricted and expensive, ownership of cars is expected to grow until 2021. This would suggest levels of car parking need to rise to accommodate the extra vehicles. The 2001 census showed average vehicle ownership levels per household in South Cambridgeshire's larger villages as typically 1.5 or less; and smaller villages typically between 1.6 and 2.0. The 2011 census figures are not yet available. In response, the local plan could raise the current maximum standards in the new Local Plan to allow for current and future levels of demand.
- 12.14 A further option would be to include no standard. This would allow for a designed approach whereby car parking provision could be tailored to reflect the specific development in terms of its location (whether there are local services available which may reduce the need to travel long distances by car), the density of development, the residential properties proposed (whether flats or large houses), together with consideration of any 'smart' measures being incorporated into the development, (such as car clubs), which may reduce the level of need for private car parking.
- 12.15 This third approach could potentially lead to better quality of built design, with potentially less land required for car parking if it is provided in innovative way, for example on appropriately designed streets and/or in small communal car parking areas which can be designed into the 'street scene'. It would allow greater flexibility for some developments, in appropriate locations, to reduce overall levels of car parking. Disadvantages are that it would provide less clarity to developers.

Issue 99: How Car Parking is provided within Residential Developments

What approach do you think the Local Plan should take to parking provision in new development?

- i. Current policy sets a maximum standard of an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, up to a maximum of 2 spaces per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas (garages count as parking spaces). Lower parking levels may be sought in areas with good accessibility to services, facilities, and public transport in appropriate circumstances.
- ii. An alternative option is that the level of provision could be raised slightly to take into account rising levels of car ownership. This could retain an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling for developments on the edge of Cambridge, but increase to an average of 2 spaces per dwelling across the remainder of district, with an average of 2.5 spaces per 3 or more bedrooms in less accessible areas.
- iii. A further option could be to remove all car parking standards and make developers determine a suitable level of car parking provision through a comprehensive design-led approach, reflecting the location, (whether there are local services available which may reduce the need to travel long distances by car), the density of development, the residential properties proposed (whether flats or large houses), together with consideration of any 'smart' measures being incorporated into the development, (such as car clubs), which may reduce the level of need for private car parking. The developer would need to demonstrate that they have provided enough car parking to ensure highway safety. Further guidance could be provided in the District Design Guide SPD.

Further information exploring residential parking issues is included in Appendix 4. See also Issue 28 in Chapter 7 on Street Widths.

Question 99:

A: What approach should the Local Plan take towards residential car parking standards? (note – all options are subject to achieving appropriate highway safety)

- i. Maximum parking standards - an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling, up to a maximum of 2 spaces per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas.
- ii. Maximum parking standards - an average of 1.5 spaces per dwelling for developments on the edge of Cambridge, but increase to an average of 2 spaces per dwelling across the remainder of district, with an average of 2.5 spaces per 3 or more bedrooms in poorly accessible areas.
- iii. Remove all car parking standards and adopt a design-led approach to car parking provision in new developments.

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Allocation of Car Parking within Residential Developments

- 12.16 Historically the most common approach to the provision of car parking in residential developments is within designated space on a private driveway or in designated communal parking areas (particularly with flats). Allocating spaces in this way has tended to lead to inflexibly designed developments, often with narrow streets unable to accommodate households with a larger number of vehicles.
- 12.17 Residential Car Parking Research undertaken by the government shows that allocating car parking spaces to individual properties reduces the efficiency of car parking provision across the whole development, as not all households own a car. This results in some on-plot car parking spaces not being used, whilst some other households may have more cars than allocated spaces. Not allocating spaces would allow provision of much less car parking overall yet still able to serve the overall needs of the whole development.
- 12.18 Even allocating a limited amount of car parking to individual properties, for example one space per dwelling, could reduce the overall level of provision and therefore the amount of land-take within the development for parking. Those households that own more than one car would be able to park additional cars in unallocated parking areas. Unallocated parking could be in the form of small communal parking areas, but it could also be in the form of on-street parking, which can be incorporated into the design of the development to ensure that road widths and specific areas are provided so it is safe to park without causing nuisance or hazard to other road users.

Issue 100: Allocation of Car Parking within Residential Developments

An issue for the Local Plan is whether it should include a policy regarding the allocation of parking spaces within a development:

- i. In order to maximise the efficiency of car parking provision across the whole development, it could require parking spaces to not be allocated to individual properties. This would reduce the overall levels of car parking needed to serve the development as a whole.
- ii. An alternative option would be to only allocate a proportion of car parking spaces needed to serve the whole development to individual properties, for example one space per dwelling. The design of the development could incorporate safe areas on-street or in designated areas to ensure additional cars can be parked without nuisance or hazard to other road users. This could ensure that on-street parking is properly designed into a development and help avoid the concerns often raised about new developments.
- iii. Alternately the Local Plan could not set a specific requirement, and the issue could be left to the design of individual developments to consider.

Further information exploring parking allocation is included in Appendix 4.

Question 100:

A: What approach should the Local Plan take to the allocation of car parking spaces in residential developments?

- i. The Local Plan should maximise the efficiency of car parking provision by not allocating any residential car parking to individual properties.
- ii. The Local Plan should only allocate a proportion of the car parking spaces to individual properties.
- iii. The Local Plan should not address the allocation of parking spaces, and it should be left to the design of individual developments.

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Residential Garages

- 12.19 Residential garages provided in new developments are often too small to accommodate modern, larger, cars and residents frequently use garages for storage, due to inadequate storage provided within homes.

Issue 101: Residential Garage Sizes

Current policy counts garages towards car parking provision but does not provide any minimum size requirements to ensure they are fit for this purpose. There is also a policy requirement for the provision of minimum levels of secure cycle parking, which is often accommodated within garages.

The Local Plan could specify minimum dimensions for residential garages that are able to accommodate modern cars, cycles and other storage needs before they can be counted towards car parking provision.

Further information exploring garage sizes is included in Appendix 4.

Question 101:

What approach should the Local Plan take to residential garages?

- i) Specify minimum size dimensions for garages to count towards parking standards, to ensure they are large enough to easily accommodate modern cars, cycles and other storage needs; or
- ii) Not address the issue of residential garage sizes.

Please provide any comments.

Car Parking Standards for Other Types of Developments

- 12.20 The Council's existing plan includes maximum parking standards for non-residential development, providing a range of different thresholds for different uses including employment, retail and community uses. Whilst these are maximum standards, the Council may still require a certain level of parking from individual developments on a case by case basis, in order to secure highway safety.

Issue 102: Car Parking Standards for Other Types of Developments

The Council's current plan sets maximum parking standards for a range of non-residential uses. It also encourages shared use of car parking, particularly in mixed-use developments where there is a mixture of day time and night time uses. These could be carried forward into the new Local Plan.

For information: Existing standards can be found in the current Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

www.scambs.gov.uk/ldf/dcpoliciesdpd

Question 102:

Should the Local Plan carry forward the maximum parking standards for non-residential development included in its existing plan?

Please provide additional comments.

Cycle Parking Standards

- 12.21 To achieve national and local objectives for sustainable transport, the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable modes, including cycling, in order to provide people with a real choice about how they travel. There is no national requirement to set cycle parking standards, although the provision of secure cycle parking at key destinations will encourage cycle use.
- 12.22 Nearly all of South Cambridgeshire is within 10km of Cambridge or a market town, which is a reasonable cycling distance. New and improved cycle infrastructure (cycle paths and parking) is continually being provided through new developments and through national funding of schemes. In addition, many businesses install showers as part of their Travel Plan, to encourage cycling to work. At the same time costs of motoring are rising and the increasingly publicised health benefits of cycling are causing more people to switch to cycling. As a result, this could be justification for requiring higher levels of cycle parking in homes, employment and other developments.

Issue 103: Cycle Parking Standards

Residential development is currently required to provide one secure cycle space per dwelling, within the curtilage where possible. Alternatively, the level of provision could be raised to one secure cycle space per bedroom.

The existing plan also sets standards for non-residential development, with different levels for different types of use. The Local Plan could retain these, or consider higher standards.

An alternative option would be for the Local Plan to remove cycle parking standards, and make developers determine a suitable level of cycle parking provision through a comprehensive design-led approach.

For information: Existing standards can be found in the current Development Control Policies Development Plan Document

www.scams.gov.uk/ldf/dcpoliciesdpd

Question 103:

A: What approach should the Local Plan take towards cycle parking standards?

- i) Retain the current minimum cycle parking standards for different types of development.
- ii) Continue to set minimum cycle parking standards for different types of development, but develop new higher levels of provision.
- iii) Remove cycle parking standards, but include a policy requiring cycle parking provision, adopting a design-led approach

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Rail Freight Interchanges and Rail Freight

- 12.23 Cambridgeshire's roads already have higher than the national average heavy commercial vehicle traffic and the use of inappropriate routes can have considerable impacts on villages. Freight traffic is predicted to quadruple by 2030. Given the importance of supporting the economic prosperity of the Cambridge area and existing levels of congestion, it is important that existing freight interchange sites are protected.

Issue 104: Rail Freight Interchanges

Current policies promote the use of rail for freight movements by permitting freight interchange facilities where they accord with other policies in the plan. In addition, existing freight sites are safeguarded for such purposes.

The Local Plan could continue this approach.

Question 104:

A: Should the Local Plan continue to protect rail freight interchange sites?

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Airfields and Public Safety Zones

- 12.24 South Cambridgeshire has a long association with flying and there are a number of established aerodromes and smaller airfields in the district. Aviation contributes to national, regional and local economies and there are a number of industries established on local airfields. However, airfields can also raise environmental issues which need careful consideration to balance the different interests that can be in conflict. In particular, noise resulting from flying activities has been a source of complaints in the past and is still a very sensitive issue in some areas of the district.
- 12.25 Public safety zones have been established around Cambridge Airport and one falls within South Cambridgeshire district. Within this area development is restricted whilst the airport is operational in order to minimise the number of people at risk of death or injury in the event of an aircraft crash on take-off or landing.

Issue 105: Aviation Related Development

The current policy provides a number of criteria for assessing new airfields or flying sites, to ensure all the impacts are fully considered and, where necessary, appropriate conditions are applied, to ensure they remain compatible with surrounding land uses.

The Local Plan could continue this approach.

Question 105:

A: Should the Local Plan continue to include a criteria-based policy for assessing and mitigating the impact of aviation related development proposals?

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches do you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Cambridge Airport – Aviation Development

- 12.26 Whilst Cambridge Airport remains in operation, consideration needs to be given to airport activity and the approach that would apply to any future aviation development proposals coming forward at Cambridge Airport in order to ensure that any development would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment and residential amenity. Whilst airports have permitted development rights which mean that some types of development in connection with the provision of services and facilities do not need planning permission, other proposals such as the construction or extension of a runway, or new passenger terminal above 500 m² or increasing the size of the existing building by 15% or more would need planning permission and a policy to deal with any such proposals is a reasonable option for consultation.

Issue 106: Cambridge Airport – Aviation Development

This option is to include a policy that would only permit aviation development at Cambridge Airport where it would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment and residential amenity.

Whilst this approach will only apply where certain types of airport development need planning permission, it would allow for due consideration of the impact of any proposals on the surrounding environment and residential amenity.

Question 106:

A: Should the Local Plan include a policy that would only permit aviation development at Cambridge Airport where it would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment and residential amenity?

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches do you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Provision of Infrastructure and Services

- 12.27 It is important that the infrastructure needs generated by development are appropriately planned for, and that infrastructure is available when it is needed.
- 12.28 The NPPF requires Local Plans to consider a wide variety of infrastructure needs, including transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat), health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities.
- 12.29 The Council has commissioned an Infrastructure Delivery Study (IDS), in partnership with Cambridge City Council. It is being developed in consultation with stakeholders. It is exploring infrastructure needs and costs, when and where infrastructure will need to be provided, the scale of funding needed to achieve this, and potential sources of funding. The IDS will also identify infrastructure critical to the delivery of the Local Plan. The IDS examines three infrastructure categories, physical (transport, energy, water and drainage, waste), social (education, health care, leisure and recreation, community and social and emergency services) and green (open space).

Funding Infrastructure and Services

- 12.30 Infrastructure provision will be funded through a number of sources. Mainstream funding, such as the County Council's capital programmes, service providers' investment programmes, and Government grant, will continue to infrastructure spending. However, other initiatives such as planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy can provide an additional resource for locally determined priorities.
- 12.31 Developer funding makes an important contribution to infrastructure. When planning permission is granted for new development the Council can seek contributions from developers towards a range of infrastructure. Currently this mainly achieved through planning obligations (section 106 agreements), negotiated on individual developments to mitigate the impacts generated by the development.
- 12.32 The Government has introduced the option for Councils to develop a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The CIL takes the form of a standardised charge applied per square metre of new development, to fund a range of infrastructure. This will replace planning obligations for many forms of infrastructure, although planning obligations can still be used for site-specific mitigation measures and for affordable housing provision.
- 12.33 If the Council decides to implement a CIL charging schedule, it will also be required to publish an infrastructure list under CIL regulation 123 identifying those items that will be paid for in whole or in part by the CIL receipts.

Issue 107: Provision of Infrastructure and Services

The Local Plan needs to include a policy regarding infrastructure provision, to require that development has made appropriate arrangements for the improvement or provision of infrastructure necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

The nature, scale and phasing of any infrastructure or funding sought will be related to the form of the development and its potential impact. Contributions could also be used to secure future upkeep or maintenance where this is deemed appropriate. This will be by means of either planning obligations and/or a future CIL.

Question 107:

A: Should the Local Plan include a policy to require development to provide appropriate infrastructure?

B: Are there any alternative policies or approaches do you think should be included?

Please provide any comments.

Waste Infrastructure

- 12.34 Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for minerals and waste planning in Cambridgeshire. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan was recently adopted, the Core Strategy in July 2011 and Site Specific Proposals Plan in February 2012. There is also an adopted Proposals Map, which shows allocated sites and areas of search for future minerals and waste facilities, and safeguarding areas for existing and future facilities.
- 12.35 The Site Specific Proposals Plan includes areas of search for waste recycling and recovery facilities at Cambridge Northern Fringe East, Cambridge East (the airport site and North of Newmarket Road), and Northstowe.
- 12.36 The draft plan had an allocation for a household recycling centre (HRC) south of the Addenbrooke's Road. However, following the examination into the plan, the Inspector recommended removal of this site due to its impact on the Green Belt and the historic environment and lack of conformity with the Cambridge Local Plan 2006. Reflecting the duty to cooperate, the Council will continue to work with the County Council and Cambridge City Council during the review of the Local Plan to try to identify a suitable site for a HRC to serve the south of Cambridge. However, this remains the responsibility of the County Council.

