

## **9.1. Introduction**

9.1.1. An effective transport system is essential to meeting the needs of the District. Continuing growth in road transport and its consequent environmental impacts, however, present a major challenge to the objective of sustainable development. Traffic growth on the scale projected in this country could threaten the ability to meet objectives for greenhouse gas emissions, for air quality, and for the protection of landscape and habitats. Unmanaged traffic growth also has social and economic consequences, for example prolonged periods of congestion with resultant impacts on local residents' quality of environment and the reduced attractiveness of centres as retail and service destinations. Good communications are essential to the local economy and to attract inward investment. It is important that the Local Plan considers how the location and the nature of development affects the amount and method of travel, and how the pattern of development is itself influenced by transport infrastructure and transport policies.

9.1.2. In Stroud District a number of different agencies provide transport facilities. The Highways Agency is responsible for trunk roads and motorways, while the County Council, as the local highway authority, is responsible for the majority of highway building, improvement and maintenance. Increasingly, the private sector is becoming involved in the provision of roads and other transport infrastructure required to serve particular developments. Since bus deregulation, bus services have been operated by the private sector, with the County Council and the District Council (by means of concessionary fares) directly and indirectly subsidising a considerable number of services. Stagecoach is the main bus operator. The main operators involved in the provision of rail services through the District are Great Western, Virgin and Wessex Trains.

9.1.3. That part of the District within the Principal Urban Area of Gloucester and the main urban areas of the District are likely to experience fairly significant growth over the next 12 years. It is particularly important to resolve the transport challenges facing these areas in a way that allows for new development, but has least impact on the environment. The District already faces a

number of traffic related problems. The main towns of Stroud and Dursley and, to a lesser extent other settlements, face congestion in and around the town centres at peak times. Failure to deal with the problems could lead to further loss of confidence in the town centres of Stroud and Dursley; a declining quality of life for those living in the towns, increased road safety and pollution problems; and the towns becoming unable to cope satisfactorily with the requirements of the Structure Plan. The District has one of the highest levels of car ownership in the country, with an average of 1.41 cars/vans per household. There is significant out commuting by car to settlements such as Gloucester, Cheltenham, Bristol and Swindon. This contributes to congestion and pollution in these areas and greater effort will be required in future to achieve a co-ordinated sustainable transport policy with all relevant authorities. There is an increasing amount of commuting by car along rural roads and at the same time, problems of poor public transport provision between our main towns and villages. Failure to deal with these problems could prejudice the ability of the Local Plan to fulfil its overall strategy.

9.1.4. It is neither practicable nor desirable to accommodate all future road traffic demands in and around our main towns. Although some highway improvements are needed, traffic management, public transport, parking policies and land use planning will be more important in dealing with transport issues now and in the future. There is much evidence nationwide that people's attitudes to traffic are changing. Car owners value the freedom and flexibility of the car, but an awareness of the need to change habits is growing. Whilst financial disincentives to use the car may be necessary, people will increasingly use alternatives only where they are convenient, comfortable and reasonably priced. Much of the District's population is presently disadvantaged in terms of public transport provision, as it is currently poor in servicing the District's main centres from the outlying rural settlements and areas. As a consequence, car dependency is high in rural areas and, without major investment in new and regular service provision to them, this dependency is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

9.1.5. Central Government now places increasing emphasis on encouraging

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alternatives to car use, limiting carbon dioxide emissions, managing urban traffic to improve the environment and guiding new development to locations where the need to travel is reduced. This Central Government view is already being reflected in the success or otherwise of bids for transport funding made by the County Council with help from District Councils such as Stroud.

### 9.2. Objectives

1. To help reduce the overall need to travel.
2. To help reduce the overall length and number of motorised journeys.
3. To ensure development proposals provide for alternative means of travel, at an appropriate scale, to the private car.
4. To ensure that uses which generate large numbers of trips are located in places which are, or have the potential to be, served by public transport.
5. To help manage traffic effectively to improve the environment, decrease congestion and limit pollution.
6. To protect the existing provision, and allow the improvement of a network of footpaths and off road cycleways to encourage local journeys by foot or cycle.
7. To improve the integration and interchange facilities of different modes of public transport.
8. To ensure that new parking provision does not encourage high levels of car use.

### 9.3. Central Government Advice

9.3.1. PPG13: Transport 2001 acknowledges that forecast levels of traffic growth, especially in urban areas, cannot be met in full, and that new road building or upgrading of existing highways will, in some cases, be environmentally unacceptable. The guidance stresses the need to minimise dependence on motor cars and to ensure that developments are located so as to be accessible to all forms of transport, including public transport, walking and cycling. Development also needs to be located to minimise journeys, particularly by motor car. In this respect the development of out of town shopping and other facilities is discouraged in favour of developments concentrated within town centres. Equally, new housing developments must be accessible for

trips by foot, cycle and public transport.

9.3.2. The 2004 White Paper “The Future of Transport” looks at the factors which will shape travel, and our transport networks, over the next 30 years. It sets out how the Government will respond to those pressures, safeguarding our economic and social well being and our environment.

9.3.3. The White Paper identifies the challenge:

*Travel offers benefits and is important in building an inclusive society. But mobility comes at a cost, we need to ensure that we can benefit from mobility and access while minimising the impact on other people and the environment, now and in the future. As the economy grows so does the need and desire of people to travel. We need to recognise this and plan ahead to get the best out of the transport system without damaging our overall quality of life. The way travel is changing needs to be taken into account. People are used to commuting further due to shortages of affordable housing near their place of work. The transport strategy has to recognise that demand for travel will increase in the future*

9.3.4. The strategy is built around three key themes:

- Sustained investment over the long term. In the White Paper the Government confirms its commitment to deliver sustained improvements to transport networks through its spending review.
- Improvements in transport management. Reorganisation of the rail industry to improve performance, legislation to be put in place where the Government sets the strategy and control public expenditure. Better traffic management to ease congestion on our road network.
- Planning Ahead. The government acknowledges in the White Paper that it cannot build it's way out of transport problems, however it intends to lead the debate on road pricing. The White Paper also states that the Government is committed to sharing decision making with regional and local stakeholders to ensure that transport decisions are taken alongside those for housing and economic growth .

The paper points out that underlining these themes an important underlying objective of the strategy is to balance the need to travel with the need to improve quality of life.

#### **9.4. South West Regional Guidance**

9.4.1. Regional Guidance reinforces the messages highlighted in PPG13 with regard to patterns of development which reduce reliance on the private car for travel, encourage greater use of public transport and enhance possibilities for walking and cycling. Where improvements to the Region's transport network are proposed, they should aim to assist in the economic development of the Region, increase the accessibility of existing and proposed development, ease congestion and improve conditions in the areas alongside transport routes and improve road safety.

9.4.2. Although the Guidance recognises that the Region is served by a relatively limited rail network, it is recommended that plans should have regard to the desirability of maintaining and developing this network - including links to other Regions.

#### **9.5. Gloucestershire County Structure Plan**

9.5.1. The strategic context is set out in the Gloucestershire Structure Plan: Third Alteration and the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP1). The LTP1 is the County Council's statement of policy and strategy for transport, and the bid document to Government for transport capital funds. The Plan was developed jointly by the County and District Councils.

9.5.2. Strategies have been developed for specific elements of transport – walking, cycling, public transport, highway maintenance, highway improvements, social exclusion, road traffic reduction. Also, strategies have been developed for spatial elements. In this respect, of particular relevance to Stroud District are the Principal Urban Area of Gloucester, the Stroud Valleys Area and the Market Towns Strategies. These will be monitored and reviewed through the five year Local Transport Plans.

9.5.3. The policies of the Transport chapter of the Structure Plan promote new road construction only as far as necessary to achieve the objectives for housing, economic development and environmental improvement. The main emphasis is to promote alternative modes of travel to the private motor car.

9.5.4. The Local Transport Plan sets out specific proposals for action in each area of the County Council's transport responsibilities. There are targets for reducing traffic levels in the main urban areas, reducing the rate of traffic growth in the County as a whole and increasing journeys by alternative modes of transport. The Local Transport Plan emphasises the need to integrate land use and transport planning to achieve a more sustainable pattern of development.

#### **9.6. Integrating Transport and Land Use Planning**

9.6.1. Adequate transport is essential for economic prosperity, but over the last few decades that prosperity has led to a rapid growth in car ownership and an increase in the amount of goods transported by road. This led to a policy to construct new roads and motorways in an attempt to cope with demand. Whilst this increased mobility has benefited many, there is increasing evidence that a new balance is needed between the demand for flexible mobility and the needs of the environment.

9.6.2. Land use decisions have, to some extent, contributed to high car dependency, particularly by allowing the separation of home, work, education, shopping and leisure activities. It is arguably the willingness of many to live in the District's attractive villages and market towns, and commute longer distances to work, that has contributed most to high car dependency in this District. This in turn has led to smaller numbers of people using public transport, particularly buses, to travel to work. The policies in this Plan provide a change in direction in anticipation of a future in which car usage is more limited than it is today. This will also help to tackle the considerable disadvantage suffered by a substantial minority in the District (7,241 out of 44,617 households 2001 Census) who do not have access to a car.

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9.6.3. A key objective in the pursuit of reduced exhaust emissions, improved local environmental quality and improved road safety is the development of an integrated transport policy encompassing all modes of transport. However, there is a lack of a suitable legislative framework. Significant progress can be made if those involved in transport matters work together to pursue such an objective. Substantial investment will be required to provide workable alternatives to the private car.

9.6.4. It is desirable for developments that attract large numbers of people to be located where there is good public transport access, in order to reduce the use of cars, and to enable those without cars to reach the development. Where development that attracts large numbers of people is proposed in a location without good public transport access, it may be necessary, if the development is appropriate in all other respects for contributions to be made to enable such access to be provided. Some small developments can generate a large number of trips and these should also be located where there is good public transport access.

9.6.5. The District, and the Stroud Valleys and Cam and Dursley in particular, does possess a number of advantages that will allow it to respond positively to the transport challenges of the next century:

- The Cheltenham to London railway line has stations at Stroud and Stonehouse. There is potential for re-opening old halts along this line in the Frome valley.
- The Cheltenham to Bristol railway line has a station close to Cam and Dursley. There is also the potential for developing a further station at Stonehouse and at Charfield just to the south of the District boundary in South Gloucestershire.
- Future growth in the District will largely occur within or close to those towns and settlements where railway facilities exist.
- Underused land along the riverside and canals in Stroud provides attractive traffic free corridors for pedestrians and cyclists.
- In Stroud and Dursley town centres there are proposals for new housing development and the Plan also encourages greater numbers of conversions of premises to residential. These are close to town centre employment, shops and facilities and, particularly in Stroud, give the choice of

different transport modes to reach employment.

- Potential exists for a sustainable community to be developed on the outskirts of Gloucester with a new railway station opened on the Bristol line adjacent to the site to provide better access to public transport.
- The Stroud Valleys contain a mixture of homes and employment and therefore the community would benefit considerably from an improved public transport system. A large proportion of new housing development within the Plan period will take place within, adjacent, or close to, the Stroud Valleys. Another major new housing allocation is at Brockworth Airfield, close to Gloucester, with its existing and new employment opportunities in relatively close proximity. There is a need as part of the development to improve the public transport provision with these nearby employment areas and Gloucester and Cheltenham city centres.

#### POLICY TR1

Permission will be granted to development that deals satisfactorily with all of the following issues:

1. the need to minimise travel, by locating complementary uses close together, focusing development in the Gloucester Principal Urban Area (PUA), Stroud Urban Area and Principal Settlements, and locations highly accessible by public transport (except in the case of those uses which are considered appropriate for rural locations in Policy EM2);
2. the need to provide access to development via a wide choice of transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport (with appropriate provision for disabled people, pedestrians and cyclists);
3. the need to design site layouts and the provision of facilities with the aim of encouraging walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
4. the need to provide for traffic calming measures, through layout and design wherever possible;
5. the need to provide for highway improvements; and

6. the need to provide appropriate levels of parking in accordance with the Council's Parking Standards.

9.6.6. Where improvements to roads or public transport are required as part of a development, developers may be required to enter into Section 106 Legal Agreements (or their successor) in order to achieve the improvements.

## **9.7. Traffic Management in Towns**

9.7.1. Traffic management is the use of physical and legal measures to control traffic movement, in order to improve safety and convenience for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people and reduce traffic congestion; in particular, by reducing the speed of traffic and discouraging non-essential traffic. Opportunities also arise to improve the street environment and introduce planting. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) for the Stroud Valleys which covers the period 2001/2-2005/6, contains a range of measures of this sort that will be considered. The LTP will be produced on a five year rolling programme and the 2006/2007 – 2010/2011 version is presently in its consultation draft form.

9.7.2. The Council will seek, in conjunction with the County Council, to identify and implement a range of traffic management measures within Stroud town centre and other town centres to reduce congestion and traffic levels, improve environmental conditions, make walking, cycling and public transport use more attractive and to reduce road accidents.

## **9.8. Pedestrian Routes and Rights of Way in Relation to Development**

9.8.1. The needs of pedestrians and disabled people must be taken into account at all times and are relevant in urban areas and villages. New development sites should not be considered in isolation but should provide or improve pedestrian links from within the site to the wider area, particularly to key areas such as schools and community services and facilities. Pedestrian routes that link key areas are needed along routes where traffic speeds are designed to be low and pedestrians have priority or motor traffic-free routes. Traffic management measures may

be required, particularly along existing highways, to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety, along with light-controlled pedestrian crossings, zebra crossings and refuges.

9.8.2. Design of pedestrian areas should, whenever possible, take full account of the access requirements of disabled people, the visually impaired and those with prams and pushchairs. Unnecessary steps should be avoided, although there may be particular sites in the urban areas where this may be difficult to achieve. Where kerbs are necessary dropped sections should be provided at road junctions and other well-used crossing points. New development or redevelopment may be required to contribute to works such as surface treatment, improved street furniture, seating and signing where these works would improve the pedestrian environment.

9.8.3. Stroud District has a very extensive Public Rights of Way network. There are important long distance paths such as the Cotswold Way National Trail and the Severn Way and also additional networks concentrated around the Stroud Valleys, Dursley and Wotton areas (See Recreation and Leisure Chapter). New development may bring opportunities to improve and extend the Public Rights of Way network. Any route crossing a site proposed for development should be retained (although it may be diverted where appropriate) and it should be incorporated as a feature into the overall site design.

### **POLICY TR2**

Proposals for development will not be permitted unless there is, or provision is made for, safe convenient and attractive access for pedestrians taking into account the needs of disabled people, within sites and where appropriate to the surrounding area. These should be lit where appropriate and further security provided through building layout and landscaping.

## **9.9. Cyclists**

9.9.1. 60% of all car journeys are less than five miles - therefore there is a great potential for modal shift from the car to the bicycle. Cycling is now increasingly seen as a convenient, cheap and environmentally friendly means of transport

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and exercise, particularly, for local journeys. Cyclists are, however, amongst the most vulnerable groups of road users. Ideally, motor-traffic free, but convenient cycle routes are preferable. However, in practical terms this can be difficult to achieve in the short to medium term.

9.9.2. Cycle routes will be planned with the following principles in mind:

- vehicle speeds should be kept down where there are significant numbers of cyclists;
- conflict between cycles and motor vehicles should be minimised;
- safe and convenient crossing points should be provided at busy roads and junctions;
- parking for cycles should be secure and convenient; and
- potential conflict between cyclists and pedestrians should be avoided where possible.

9.9.3. Despite the steep gradients in many of the built-up areas of the District, particularly the Stroud Valleys, there are a significant number of cyclists in the District. As part of an integrated transport policy, the Council is keen to make sure that short journeys by cycle are facilitated by convenient and safe networks. This will enable more short journeys by cycle to be made by people who are unwilling to negotiate traffic, often quite heavy traffic in peak hours, when, for example, they want to use their cycles to get to work, school or college. Developments will be expected to provide for safe and convenient cycle access to enable employees or residents to use cycles where possible.

9.9.4. The District Council is committed to encouraging an increased use of cycles for a range of journeys. The provision of safe and well routed cycleways can make a considerable contribution to achieving lower levels of car use and therefore air and noise pollution within the Plan area. The Council considers that priority should be given to the extension of existing routes to form networks in the built up areas of the District. However, recreational routes in less densely populated areas will be encouraged, since this could lead people to consider using their bikes for everyday journeys. Well designed cycle route networks have been successfully implemented in cities, both in Britain (such as in York), but

more particularly in countries such as the Netherlands and Switzerland (in spite of the gradients and weather conditions in the latter). It is anticipated that much of the cycle network in the Stroud valleys and Cam and Dursley will be completed by 2011, but the majority will be carried out towards the end of the Plan period. Much of the network will therefore be safeguarded from harmful development in the interim.

9.9.5. Sustrans are implementing the National Cycle Network, with Route 41 Bristol - Stratford crossing the Severn Vale through Berkeley and Frampton and Route 45 Salisbury – Chester linking Nailsworth and parts of the A419 with Stroud. Parts of these routes will be useful for local journeys as well as for recreation, and the District Council, in conjunction with the County Council, will investigate connecting links with these routes (some are already partially in place) from the Stroud Valleys and Cam and Dursley. Policies TR3 and TR4 will contribute directly to the sustainable transport objectives of the Plan.

#### POLICY TR3

Proposals for development will not be permitted unless there is, or provision is made for, safe and convenient cycle access within the site and to the surrounding area, where appropriate. Contributions will be sought where appropriate to provide cycle links with the surrounding area.

#### POLICY TR4

Development will not be permitted where it will harm an existing cycle route or the implementation of the following routes shown on the Proposals Map:

1. The Ebley Mill to Chalford cycle route.
2. The Cam and Dursley cycle route.
3. The National Cycle Network Route 41 (Bristol to Stratford) and Route 45 (Salisbury to Chester) which cross the District and connecting routes to and from the Stroud Valleys Pedestrian Cycle Trail and the Cam and Dursley cycle route.
4. Any part of the cycle network highlighted through the Local Transport Plan.

## **Cycle Parking**

9.9.6. Given the importance the Council attaches to encouraging cycling and the programme of creating new cycleways in the District, the Council believes it is reasonable to plan for cycling assuming a much increased percentage of all types of trip by the end of the Plan period. There is a need, therefore, for secure parking for cycles in new development proposals, and also within existing developed areas. Otherwise, the fear of theft is likely to deter cycle use. Design is very important and the proven design is that of a hoop stand, for example, Sheffield stand, which provides two cycle spaces, although the Council is willing to consider alternative designs which contribute to the local environment, particularly in sensitive locations, such as Conservation Areas and Town Centres.

9.9.7. It is considered important that provision is made within developments for the parking of bicycles, and Appendix 8 sets out the District Council's Cycle Parking Standards. These should be adhered to when designing and building new developments.

### **POLICY TR5**

Adequate provision should be made for secure cycle parking in development proposals, in accordance with the Council's Parking Standards. Where this is not possible, a commuted sum for the provision of secure cycle parking elsewhere in the vicinity will be sought.

## **9.10. Home Zones**

9.10.1. A Home Zone is a street or group of streets where pedestrians have priority and cars travel at little more than walking pace. Home zones have tended to be applied to existing streets. Within the zone there are a range of features that force drivers to drive slowly and safely, such as speed tables, road pinching, together with planting, extended pavement areas with seats and for children's casual play, and often small equipped play areas. Home Zones are common in Western Europe, and since 2000 the legislation necessary to allow their introduction in this country has been in place. The Council wishes to ensure a better quality of life in new

developments by reducing traffic speeds in residential streets and making them safe and attractive for non-motorists, thus creating a better living environment and fostering community spirit. The current legislation enabling the designation of Home Zones is the Transport Act 2000. New developments are able to incorporate the principles within their layouts from the outset, such as short lengths of street, angles in the road layout that reduce forward visibility and planting, that will keep traffic speeds in these areas to a low speed between 10 and 20 m.p.h and give priority to the use of streets by residents.

### **POLICY TR6**

All proposals for housing will be assessed to establish whether there is a need to provide a Home Zone as an integral part of the development. Such provision will depend on factors including location, form, scale, density and local traffic conditions.

## **9.11. Buses and Taxis**

9.11.1. For those people who do not have access to a car, buses and taxis are crucial. Bus stops, shelters and taxi ranks must be conveniently located and the Council will ensure that the redevelopment of key sites includes such facilities to make public transport as convenient as possible for users.

9.11.2. Where new development is proposed, the operational efficiency of public transport needs to be taken into account in the layout and detailed planning. The Council has little direct influence on the quality, cost and frequency of bus services - it can, however, help to make sure that adequate facilities are included in the new development (shelters, seats and convenient pedestrian routes). It can also, in conjunction with the County Council, help design traffic management schemes (such as bus priority routes/bus only turning movements at junctions) that help to reduce bus journey times and therefore increase their attractiveness.

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Development proposals should cater for the needs of bus and taxi operators, where appropriate, Layouts should encourage operational efficiency, maximise likely bus passenger traffic, and include ancillary facilities such as shelters and seating. Contributions will be sought to secure appropriate public transport provision.

## 9.12. Rail Facilities

9.12.1. The Council recognises the increasing pressure that journeys to work by car places on the road system, in addition to the environmental harm that is caused. Therefore, it is keen to see the greater use of existing rail facilities, through better integration with other modes of transport and the re-opening of stations and halts, where appropriate.

### Transport Interchange at Stroud Station

9.12.2. There are two stations on the Cheltenham to Swindon/London line in the District - at Stroud and Stonehouse. One of the problems of both stations, but particularly Stroud, is the lack of integration with other more sustainable transport modes such as cycle routes and bus services. The District Council, in conjunction with the County Council and others, is keen to address this with a new interchange facility at Stroud station. The station is located in an ideal location for linking with journeys to the town centre and local services. The Transport Interchange scheme involves the construction of a combined bus/cycle/pedestrian link on land adjacent to the main railway.

### PROPOSAL TR8

The area of land between Stroud railway station and London Road is allocated for access to and provision of a Transport Interchange. This will include the following:

1. a dedicated feeder lane for buses, taxis, pedestrians and cyclists between London Road and the railway station with a connection to Russell Street;
2. bus stopping space for about 7 buses at any one time;

3. provision of secure under cover cycle parking;
4. provision for disabled parking and taxis.

## Re-opening of Stations and Halts

9.12.3. The District Council will support proposals for the re-opening of passenger stations and halts and the provision of rail freight facilities. As potential sites are identified that can be developed over the Plan period, the Council will safeguard them from inappropriate development - in particular the Council will protect sites at Stonehouse (Bristol line) and at Ebley. The Council appreciates, however, that the re-opening of previous sites themselves may not be feasible, for example due to health and safety regulations, and there may be difficulties in finding acceptable alternative sites along the routes. It is possible that alternative sites may come forward in association with development proposals, and the Council is willing to consider these subject to the associated development being acceptable.

9.12.4. The success of the re-opening of the station at Coaley Junction (Cam and Dursley railway station) since May 1994 has shown the value of re-openings in reducing longer car journeys for all types of trip. Discussions are taking place to open up the station at Charfield (in South Gloucestershire but close to Wotton-under-Edge and Kingswood), this station would provide commuters in the south of the District with easy rail access to both Bristol and Gloucester. Consideration is also being given to the provision of a new passenger station within the mixed use allocation (MU1) at Hunts Grove. The Council would also like to see the opening of the Stonehouse station on the Bristol line. This would provide a much better public transport link to the south of the District from the Stroud valleys – a connection that is very poor at present. The re-opening of the Ebley halt would also help reduce congestion and improve the environment by allowing people to take short journeys to and from Stroud town centre by rail as well as further afield. The Council supports the provision of these new stations as they will provide an alternative mode of transport for existing and new residents in the localities.

9.12.5. With regard to carriage of freight, the freight only line to Sharpness Docks remains open but is currently little used, this being the

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product of the decline in trade at the Docks following the recession. The Council continues to support a strategy that will rejuvenate trade at the port and optimise the use of the railhead facility for freight. The line can play an important role in taking freight off the roads, thus making a contribution to the alleviation of environmental problems caused by heavy goods vehicles.

#### POLICY TR9

Proposals for the opening or re-opening of passenger stations and halts, and the provision of rail freight facilities will be permitted where acceptable potential sites are identified by feasibility studies.

#### POLICY TR10

Permission will not be granted for development which would result in the loss of land or facilities necessary for the efficient operation of existing stations, or for the provision of re-opened stations/halts at Stonehouse (Bristol line) or at Ebley, as defined on the Proposals Map.

### 9.13. Waterborne Freight

9.13.1. Waterborne transport accounts for over a quarter of national freight movement. However, Gloucestershire has limited potential for major expansion of this form of transport although Stroud District does contain the County's main port at Sharpness. The port is on the River Severn at the head of the Bristol Channel Navigation and the seaward end of the Gloucester and Sharpness canal. This canal connects Gloucester with the Severn Estuary. However, the majority of commercial shipping is catered for at Sharpness and therefore does not progress along the canal to Gloucester. The re-establishment of the rail link to Sharpness Port does offer the potential for a trimodal facility, and the increased use of water will therefore be encouraged. The restoration of the Stroudwater and part of the Thames and Severn canals to full navigation through the Stroud area and beyond will also provide the potential for the movement of freight. The canals in the District are used predominantly for recreation and Policy RL8 within the Recreation and Leisure chapter relates to the need to retain and improve the canals and their towpaths for navigation and public access.

9.13.2. Greater use of water-borne freight in place of long distance road transport is part of a more sustainable transport policy. There is a railway line at Sharpness that connects with the main Bristol to Birmingham line. Therefore, there is the opportunity for enhanced inter modal freight transfer here. The Council supports the maximum use of the port facilities at Sharpness and will not permit proposals that will prejudice this use. There is a significant amount of employment already generated by the dock at Sharpness and there are further areas of land capable of being developed for employment purposes within the vicinity of the docks (See Employment and Tourism chapter).

#### POLICY TR11

Proposals for development within the boundary of the docks at Sharpness which would harm the viability of the docks for handling freight and shipping repairs will not be permitted.

### 9.14. Parking Standards

9.14.1. The need for new parking to serve development must not conflict with the Council's objective of reducing traffic congestion and encouraging other non car modes of transport - the greatest potential for this being within the major allocations at Hunts Grove and Brockworth, the Stroud Valleys and in Cam and Dursley. The Council's parking standards are set out in Appendix 8. These standards are broadly in line with those promoted by Gloucestershire County Council in the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2001/2-2005/6.

9.14.2. The Council wishes to promote the use of under-used buildings, particularly upper floors of shops and offices for residential use in town centres to assist in revitalising them, however, such buildings often do not have the benefit of any parking provision. The Council will consider housing developments without on-site parking provision, in the town centres of Stroud and Dursley (as defined on the Proposals Map). Residential Parking Standards may not be reduced in other town centres, depending on the level of public parking provision and public transport provision. The Council is concerned, however, that lower levels of parking provision for new

housing development in town centres could lead to pressure for on-street parking in both commercial and nearby residential areas, and therefore will consider large housing development proposals very carefully in this respect. This is particularly the case in the town of Wotton-Under-Edge, where there is a shortage of public parking provision. Housing proposals in such towns, where parking problems exist, will be expected to meet the parking standards, unless it can be clearly shown that the benefits of the development outweigh the need to meet these standards.

environmental quality for local residents and within town centres, and support the improved maintenance of the primary and secondary road network.

9.14.3. The vehicle parking standards laid out in Appendix 8, require development proposals involving the construction of C3 dwelling houses to provide an average of 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit. This provision shall be made for all developments, unless it can be demonstrated, through a supporting parking study, that a greater parking provision would assist in alleviating an existing, on-street parking problem.

9.14.4. Mixed uses will be assessed as a sum of each of the relevant individual elements of the proposal.

#### **POLICY TR12**

Development proposals should provide appropriate vehicle parking spaces in accordance with the Council's Parking Standards.

### **9.15. Road Network and Development**

9.15.1. The primary road network is identified in the Structure Plan for the purposes of giving appropriate priority to the road building and improvement programme, the maintenance of roads and the management of different types of traffic. The priorities are affected by issues of resources, safety considerations, environmental effects, and physical characteristics. Due to resource constraints and the realisation that road schemes can lead to increasing traffic levels, it is unlikely that further major road schemes will go ahead in this District. However, the Council will continue to press for improvements where they are considered necessary to improve