

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. Therefore, 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 primarily 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 and Badgerline are two of the main bus operators. The main operators involved in the provision of rail services through the District are Great Western, Virgin and Wales and West.

9.1.3. The main urban areas of the District are likely to experience fairly significant growth over the next 12 years. Therefore, it is particularly important to resolve the transport challenges facing the District 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 1.29 cars 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.

9.1.5. Central Government now places increasing emphasis on encouraging 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 growth in the 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 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 1994 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 1998 Transport White Paper introduced further measures to improve the integration of transport modes and allow local authorities to finance local solutions to local transport problems. The Government states in the White Paper that its overall approach to planning is aimed at containing the dispersal of development, so reducing the need to travel, and improving access to jobs, leisure and services. It wants to promote regional strategies for planning that are integrated and sustainable, which will provide the context for 'local transport plans' and development plans. The Paper states that the Government will update planning guidance to ensure that the right framework exists to deliver integrated transport policy at the local level.

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; Second Review and the Gloucestershire Transport Plan.

9.5.2 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.

9.5.3 The 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, and reducing the rate of growth in the County as a whole. The Transport Plan emphasises the need to integrate land use and transport planning to achieve a more sustainable pattern of development.

9.5.4 The Transport Plan and the annual Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) are being superseded by the new 'Local Transport Plan' for Gloucestershire, which is both a strategic policy and bid for funding document, and will include targets for reducing road traffic and increasing journeys by alternative modes of transport, including freight movements.

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 (8531 out of 40,532 households - 1991 Census) who do not have access to a car.

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9. TRANSPORT

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 large new developments 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 a large new development 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 which 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.
- 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 city centre.

• POLICY T1

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

1. the need to minimise travel, for example, by locating complementary uses close together;
2. the need to provide access to development via a wide choice of transport modes, including public transport, cycling and walking (with proper provision for people with disabilities and careful attention to cyclist and pedestrian safety);
3. the need to design site layouts and the provision of facilities with the aim of encouraging a choice of forms of transport, for example cycle parking and bus stops;
4. the need to provide traffic calming measures, through layout and design wherever possible;
5. the need to include road or public transport improvements in the vicinity of the development if extra traffic is generated; and
6. the need to provide operational and maximum car parking spaces and cycle parking spaces, as set out in the Council's Adopted Parking Guidelines.

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 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 contains a range of measures of this sort which would be considered. The LTP will be produced on a five year rolling programme.

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 in order 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. Pedestrian routes which link key areas (schools, shops and residential areas), are needed, as far as possible along traffic-free routes. Traffic management measures may be required 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 the disabled, 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 should contribute to works such as surface treatment, improved street furniture, seating and signing.

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 into the overall site design.

POLICY T2

Proposals for new development and re-development will not be permitted unless provision is made for safe, convenient and attractive access for pedestrians and for the disabled to the surrounding network of routes. These should be lit where appropriate and further security provided by the careful layout of buildings 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 and exercise, particularly, for local journeys. Cyclists are, however, amongst the most vulnerable groups of road users. Ideally, off highway 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 in the District. Parts of this route 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 this route (some are already partially in place) from the Stroud Valleys and Cam and Dursley. Policies T3 and T4 will contribute directly to the sustainable transport objectives of the Plan.

POLICY T3

Proposals for new development and redevelopment will not be permitted unless there is an existing safe and convenient cycle access to and from the surrounding area or provision is made for such access. Contributions may be sought from development in the urban areas to provide safe and convenient cycle access to and from the identified cycle network and/or the improvement of the network within close proximity of the proposed development.

POLICY T4

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) which crosses 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 the District Council has adopted Cycle Parking Guidelines. These are included as Supplementary Planning Guidance and should be adhered to when designing and building new developments.

Policy T5

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

9.10. Buses and Taxis

9.10.1. 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.

9.10.2. 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 effect 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) which help to reduce bus journey times and therefore increase their attractiveness.

Policy T6

New development should cater for the needs of bus and taxi operators by providing layouts which encourage operational efficiency, maximise likely bus passenger traffic, and include ancillary facilities such as shelters and seating.

9.11. Rail Facilities

9.11.1. 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

9.11.2. 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 T7

The area of land between Stroud railway station and London Road, shown on the Proposals Map, 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 from London Road to the railway station, with an exit for buses and taxis to Russell Street;**
- 2. part of the forecourt area in the site to provide bus stopping space for about 7 buses at any one time;**
- 3. provision of secure under cover cycle parking;**
- 4. part of the forecourt area of the site to provide space for disabled parking and taxi spaces; and**
- 5. careful attention to be paid to the design of the feeder road to ensure that it fits in sympathetically with its surroundings.**

Re-opening of Stations and Halts

9.11.3. 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 which 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 also supports the reopening of

Charfield station in South Gloucestershire and the opportunity for a new station at Quedgeley in Gloucester City which is close to the housing allocation at Hardwicke.

9.11.4. 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) and consideration is also being given to a new station at Quedgeley, in Gloucester City but close to the District boundary. 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.

9.11.5. With regard to carriage of freight, the freight only line to Sharpness Docks remains open but is currently little used, this being the 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 T8

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.

POLICY T9

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.

9.12. Waterborne Freight

9.12.1. 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 Gloucester and Sharpness canal is used predominantly for recreational use and policies relating to this use are to be found in the Recreation and Leisure chapter.

9.12.2. Greater use of water-borne freight in place of long distance road transport is part of a more sustainable transport policy. There also exists at Sharpness a railway line which 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 which 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 dock (See Employment and Tourism chapter).

POLICY T10

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.

9.13. Parking Guidelines

9.13.1. 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 Stroud Valleys and in Cam and Dursley. Previously, parking standards were expressed as minimum standards and some developers have often been keen to provide as much parking as physically possible on a site. PPG13 paragraph 4.5 advises that standards in Local Plans should be set as a range of maximum and operational minimum requirements. The District Council's revised parking guidelines, contained in its Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance: Parking Guidelines, have been set out in this form.

9.13.2. The Council wishes to promote the use of under-used buildings, particularly upper floors of shops and offices for residential use in town centres. Therefore, there are relaxed parking guidelines for housing development in the town centres of Stroud and Dursley (as defined on the Proposals Map). Residential parking guidelines in the other town

centres may be relaxed 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 parking in nearby residential areas, and therefore will consider large housing development proposals very carefully in this respect.

9.13.3. For other developments where there is insufficient space in town centres, alternative arrangements may be made in the form of commuted sums to provide, for example, cycle parking or traffic management schemes depending on the scale of the development. The commuted payment in this instance will be based on the reduced parking requirements in town centres. The Council wishes to ensure that the application of reduced levels of parking in town centres does not lead to pressure for developments outside of the main centres where plentiful parking could be feasible. If such a development is acceptable in all other respects, the Council will seek contributions from the developer to enable good public transport access and/or cycle routes is provided rather than generous parking provision. These commuted payments will be based on maximum parking requirements.

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

POLICY T11

Development proposals should be provided with vehicle parking spaces in accordance with the Council's Adopted Parking Guidelines.

POLICY T12

Proposals for development within the defined town centres which are otherwise acceptable, but which cannot accommodate adequate parking provision on site due to physical constraints, or have poor accessibility to non car transport modes, may be permitted, but will be subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement relating to the payment of a commuted sum for contributions to measures to assist public transport, walking or cycling, or the provision of parking spaces in the locality, in accordance with the District Council's guidelines.

9.14. Road Network and Development

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

9.14.2. The Council will allocate an area of land for a new road, which will relieve town centre congestion in Dursley, as part of a new supermarket and housing development. This road will help the regeneration of Dursley town centre by improving access from one side of the town to the other, but will also improve the shopping environment of the town centre and create safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. The supermarket, housing and road scheme is likely to be completed towards the middle part of the Plan period.

PROPOSAL T13

Land between Castle Street and Uley Road, Dursley, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for the Dursley Relief Road, in conjunction with a new supermarket and housing development.

9.15. Motorway Service Stations

9.15.1. Central Government guidance on Motorway Service Areas (MSAs) is contained in Annex A of PPG13. However, this guidance has been supplemented by a Parliamentary Statement made on 31 July 1998. This statement outlines a policy based on the provision of MSAs approximately every thirty miles, in order to provide drivers with adequate opportunities to stop and rest. Services at closer intervals will not be ruled out completely, but the Government expects to approve them only where there are exceptional need and safety grounds for doing so.

9.15.2. There has been pressure in the past from developers in Stroud District for the provision of a MSA. Provision currently exists in the south of the

District at Michaelwood. The nearest provision along the M5 to the north is then at Strensham, some 33 miles away. Tewkesbury Borough Council has now allocated land at Hucclecote for a MSA. This site is 15 miles from Strensham services. The site would also cater for drivers using the A417. Whether this site is deemed acceptable or not by DETR under the July 1998 guidelines, this District Council considers that there are not exceptional need and safety grounds for the location of a MSA along the M5 corridor in the north of Stroud District.

9.15.3. The distance between Michaelwood and Strensham is not sufficient to justify the harm to the landscape that another MSA would cause in this District. Three planning inquiries in the 1990s considered and rejected proposals for MSAs in the Hardwicke and Brookthorpe areas. In each case the compelling need for a MSA was not demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Inspector or the Secretary of State, and was outweighed by the harm done to the landscape. As the M5 runs entirely through the countryside within Stroud District, any proposal for an MSA within the District is bound to conflict with the advice in PPG 7 to protect the countryside for its own sake. Given the allocation by Tewkesbury Borough Council at Hucclecote, and, more particularly, the July 1998 government guidelines, it is not considered that provision should be made for any further MSAs within Stroud District during the Plan period.

Policy T14

Permission will not be granted for a Motorway Service Area, additional to the existing Michaelwood Services, in the M5 corridor within Stroud District.