

- 8.77 Despite relatively high levels of car accessibility, walking remains the most popular form of travel in terms of number of journeys made, although not in terms of total distance travelled. Surveys of neighbourhood centres carried out in 1993 indicated that up to 70% of all local trips were made on foot.
- 8.78 PPG13 identifies the need to make areas and developments safer and more attractive to pedestrians and the new Transport White Paper emphasises the need to give priority to pedestrians.
- 8.79 Most of the housing areas in the Borough are constructed on traditional lines with footways adjacent to carriageways. The main disincentives to walking are a lack of convenience due to the severance of desire routes by roads and other major obstructions and the perceptions of road safety and personal safety problems.
- 8.80 The problem of severance can be partly overcome by incorporating traffic signal controls at heavily trafficked junctions and the installation of new pelican crossings where appropriate.
- 8.81 In addition, pedestrian networks can be identified which direct people along convenient, safe and environmentally attractive routes to key destinations throughout the town.
- 8.82 Within the town centre, the High Street Piazza area between Church Street and Alpha Street was fully pedestrianised in February 1998 and environmental improvements have been carried out in the Town Square and MacKenzie Street areas. One of the objectives of the Heart of Slough proposal is to further improve pedestrian access into and around the town centre without having to use unpopular subways.
- 8.83 The Council is also identifying "Safe Routes to School" in order to reverse the trend that has seen the percentage of 7-8 year olds making independent journeys to school decline from 80% to 9% in the last twenty years. The creation of a child-friendly environment which restores the opportunity for independent mobility, either on foot or by bike, has a number of benefits for all of those involved as well as reducing traffic congestion at peak hours.

Policy T6 (Pedestrian Access)

Permission will not be granted for proposals which do not include suitable pedestrian access to and through the site.

- 8.84 In applying this policy, the Council will ensure that the design of the development will achieve a high level of safety, security and convenience for pedestrians compatible with a high quality environment within the scheme with no detriment to the occupants of nearby buildings.
- 8.85 Circular 2/93 sets out the responsibility that local planning authorities have to ensure that new development does not adversely affect the rights of way network. The maintenance of a rights of way network is particularly important in a built up area such as Slough where it can encourage local trips to be made on foot. All existing rights of way will therefore be safeguarded and new ones sought where they are needed in new developments.

Policy T7 (Rights of Way)

Planning permission will not be granted for developments which affect an existing right of way unless the proposal maintains the right of way to an appropriate standard or makes provision for its diversion along a route

which is at least as attractive, safe and convenient for public use. An enhancement of the right of way network will be sought where this is needed as a result of new development.

Cycling

- 8.86 Cycling should be considered as a regular mode of transport within urban areas such as Slough and used in preference to the private car. The lack of a comprehensive cycle route network in Slough has, however, deterred cyclists to the extent that in 1991, only 4% of journeys to work were by bike.
- 8.87 Slough is ideally suited to a transport strategy in which cycling can be given a leading role as a sustainable, cheap, efficient, safe and therefore attractive means of travel. It is both flat and compact which means that the majority of the journeys made to the town centre, the Trading Estate and to the district centres are of a length which may be conveniently cycled. In addition, secondary schools offer the opportunity to effect a modal shift in education trips, provided that improved "Safe Routes to School" can be created.
- 8.88 The latest transport White Paper supports the development of the National Cycle Network which is being coordinated by Sustrans and the National Cycling Strategy published in 1996. This highlighted the potential of cycling as a flexible, relatively cheap and environmentally friendly way to travel, with important health benefits for people of all ages. The Strategy also establishes a national target of doubling the amount of cycling within the period 1996-2002.
- 8.89 The main contribution that the Local Plan can make to meeting such targets is to ensure that all of the necessary infrastructure is provided. Whilst the opportunities to provide segregated cycle paths are limited in the built up areas of Slough, in many cases an improved environment for cyclists can be achieved by the combination of the creation of short sections of segregated cycle paths, the use of shared paths with pedestrians and the provision of cyclist crossing facilities at busy road junctions.
- 8.90 A local cycling network has been identified for Slough; this also incorporates the Sustrans national routes which run through Slough (see Chapter 7 paragraph 7.11 for further details). The Plan will seek to expand and upgrade this network as well as safeguard it from inappropriate development.
- 8.91 The Local Transport Plan for 2001-2006 contains a proposal for a signed cycle route along the entire length of the A4 within Slough as a first priority. It is then intended to implement the cycle routes on the various north/south corridors and eventually sign all the quieter local streets that make up the rest of the cycle network. Funding for the implementation of parts of the network will be sought from all major developments which would result in an increased demand for travel.
- 8.92 The provision of cycle parking facilities will also be required within new commercial and residential developments (see Appendix 2). Cycle racks should be well lit, visible, close to main entrances and secured where possible. Other facilities for cyclists such as showers and changing rooms will also be required in major commercial developments.

Policy T8 (Cycling Network and Facilities)

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the implementation of the proposed cycle network in Slough.