

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.

Permission will not be granted for proposals which do not include suitable cycle access to and through the site and cycle parking racks and other facilities for cyclists as an integral part of the development.

Where a major development would result in increased demand for travel, the Council will seek a financial contribution by way of agreement towards, and/or required by condition(s), appropriate improvements to the cycleway network.

- 8.93 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 cyclists compatible with a high quality environment within the scheme and with no detriment to the occupants of nearby buildings.

Buses

- 8.94 Slough is reasonably well covered in terms of bus service availability, with only relatively small areas of residential development beyond a 400 metre walking distance from a bus stop at which daytime half-hourly services are available. However, this conceals a number of shortcomings in the public transport system such as delays, reliability, prices and quality.
- 8.95 This is reflected in the fact that in 1991 only 6% of journeys to work in Slough were by bus compared to Reading, for example, where the figure was 14%.
- 8.96 Current travel times represent a considerable impediment for bus operators in Slough and for passengers. Services are provided by a number of companies and the pattern of routes often requires users to change services once or even twice to make a single journey. Services are, in general, given no priority over other traffic and ticketing systems are not sufficiently automated to cope with boarding delays. Even where the network can compete with the private car, the overall impression given to potential users is an uncertain one as to what is on offer.
- 8.97 In order to make the bus an attractive alternative to the car, bus journey times need to be able to compete with those by car and thus bus priority measures will need to be introduced across the network.
- 8.98 A fundamental part of making the bus an attractive mode of travel is to ensure that the waiting facilities provide a welcoming environment. Bus service and timetable information also has to be provided at the stopping place. The quality at each stopping place will vary according to its use and location, ranging from a high quality shelter with real time passenger information to a simple bus stop post with a conventional timetable board.
- 8.99 The proximity of Slough to Heathrow airport is of particular relevance to the public transport network. With approximately 6000 Slough residents being employed at or around the airport, it is essential that good public transport links Slough to Heathrow and in particular to the cargo village. Ways will be looked at of improving public transport accessibility to these areas, including better bus service provision.
- 8.100 The Council runs a concessionary fares scheme whereby Slough elderly or disabled residents can purchase a pass which provides them with free bus travel in Slough enhancing mobility to this section of the community which does not have easy access to a car.