

- 8.43 The types of improvements will include support for public transport, traffic management and road safety schemes, the introduction of traffic calming measures or on-street parking control schemes, and the construction of bus priority measures, cycle lanes and improved pedestrian routes.
- 8.44 Such schemes will be carried out within the general vicinity of the proposed development or in the transport corridors leading to it, where the additional demand is directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, and reasonable in all other respects. All major travel generators within the town centre, which lead to traffic growth and congestion on the network as a whole, if appropriate compensatory measures are not undertaken, will be required to contribute to appropriate improvements leading to and within the town centre, regardless of whether or not the particular road on which the development is located is subject to congestion.
- 8.45 The scale of transport improvements, or financial contributions towards them, that will be appropriate to seek from individual developments should be necessary, relevant, and directly related to the proposed development. The necessary transport improvements will be assessed in terms of the likely number of employees or visitors, the travel catchment area that they are likely to come from, the availability of public transport and its capacity to meet increased demand, and the proposed level of parking. The requirement for an individual development would take into account the use class, floorspace, location and on site parking provision. Based on this assessment, the Council will seek financial contributions towards transport improvements directly related to a proposed development that are necessary, relevant, reasonably related in scale and kind and reasonable in all other respects.

### **Parking Restraint**

- 8.46 A key element of the Plan's transport policy is to seek to restrain the level of private non-residential parking at less than the demand for spaces in order to reduce the reliance on the private car at peak times, particularly journeys to work.
- 8.47 The Government has stated that without policy changes, traffic is forecast to grow by more than a third over the next twenty years and by over 80% over the next thirty. By 2016 a quarter of the trunk road network could be congested at peak times which will in turn impact on the local road network particularly in terms of increasing volumes of through traffic.
- 8.48 It is intended to reverse this trend by a combination of the national, regional and local policies and measures that have been highlighted above. To this end, Slough's Integrated Transport Strategy has adopted a target to maintain traffic levels at 1995 levels. In the context of the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997, this target will broadly translate to a 10% reduction in traffic below 1998 levels.
- 8.49 In order to achieve this, it will be necessary to adopt a whole range of measures to encourage a greater number of journeys to be made on foot, by cycling and use of the bus or the train. These will include a combination of improving public transport and cycling facilities which will at least partly have to be funded by developer contributions. The Government is also intending to introduce fiscal measures to reduce the relative attractiveness of using the private car and Local Authorities will have to review public car parking charges. In planning terms, the two main tools that are available are ensuring that all major new developments are located in areas that are well served by public transport and reducing the availability of parking spaces.
- 8.50 The 1991 Census showed that in Slough 71% of travel to work was by car, 14% on foot, 4% by bicycle, 6% by bus, and 5% by rail. It is considered that such a high dependence

upon the car for journeys to work is no longer sustainable and should not be planned for in the future.

- 8.51 As a result, the Local Plan non-residential parking standards for all new developments will be based upon adopting a target to reduce the use of the car to only 50% of journeys to work and adopting the broad principle that there should be no increase in the total number of parking spaces as a result of redevelopment within the existing business areas.
- 8.52 Whilst this in itself will not produce the 10% reduction in traffic which is being sought, it is considered to be an achievable target given the increased emphasis that is being placed upon improving public transport and the introduction of the new locational policies which will ensure that all major travel generating developments will only be permitted in areas such as the town centre which have good accessibility for other forms of transport.
- 8.53 The introduction of off-street parking restraint measures will mean that potential problems with on street parking will also have to be addressed in order to protect residential areas from overspill parking. The Road Traffic Act 1991 now enables local authorities outside London to create Special Parking Areas and take on the same responsibility for enforcement as has happened in London. This gives the local authority greater control over this element of traffic management and will have to be considered in the future.
- 8.54 The Local Plan policies are intended to reduce the use of the private car, particularly at peak times. They are not intended to discourage car ownership, particularly in households that currently do not have access to a car. Most car journeys start from home, but the decision about whether or not to use the car is generally determined more by the availability of parking spaces at the end of the trip. As a result, it is proposed to control the supply of parking at the destination rather than the origin of a journey. It is not, therefore, intended to apply the same restraint policies to residential areas as it is to commercial uses. It is recognized that, in many cases, the lack of adequate off-street parking provision can cause congestion or road safety problems and can lead to unofficial parking taking place in locations where this detracts from the overall appearance or the amenities of an area.
- 8.55 Within the context of an overall policy of restraint, maximum parking standards will therefore be applied to non-residential developments and more flexible standards applied to residential developments in accordance with the principles set out in Policy T2 below.

#### **Policy T2 (Parking Restraint)**

**Within all developments that attract an increase in the number of trips, the level of on-site parking provision for the private car will be restricted to a maximum level in accordance with the principles of the Integrated Transport Strategy.**

**No increase in the total number of car parking spaces on-site will be permitted within commercial redevelopment schemes.**

**Additional on-site car parking provision will only be required where this is needed to overcome road safety problems, protect the amenities and operational requirements of adjoining users, and ensure that access can be obtained for deliveries and emergency vehicles.**

**Residential development will be required to provide a level of parking appropriate to its location and which will overcome road safety problems,**

**protect the amenities of adjoining residents, and not result in an adverse visual impact upon the environment.**

8.56 The parking standards will be subject to regular reviews which will take account of such factors as the extent to which the targets are being met in accordance with the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997, measures that are needed to comply with air quality standards in accordance with the Environment Act 1995, the introduction of new regional or Structure Plan parking standards, the extent to which on-street parking controls have been introduced, and of course the availability of public transport.

8.57 An indication of the level of parking restraint that is needed to meet the target of 50% of all journeys to work being by car can be calculated in the following way. Firstly, the approximate number of people who are likely to be employed in different types of buildings can be estimated by using the following worker densities which are derived from the 1997 study on the "Use of Business Space" by Roger Tym/SERPLAN.

B1(a) Offices (general)	19 square metres per employee
B1(a) Offices (town centre)	18 square metres per employee
B1(a) Offices (out of town)	23 square metres per employee
B1(c) Light Industrial	25 square metres per employee
B2 Industrial	33 square metres per employee
B8 Storage & Distribution	48 square metres per employee

8.58 Assuming that there is a ten per cent reduction for a combination of absenteeism and the shared use of the car, then the maximum parking standards for achieving the reduction in the use of the car to 50% of journeys to work should be:

B1(a) Offices (general)	maximum of one space per 42 m <sup>2</sup>
B1(a) Offices (town centre)	maximum of one space per 40 m <sup>2</sup>
B1(a) Offices (out of town)	maximum of one space per 51 m <sup>2</sup>
B1(c) Light Industrial	maximum of one space per 55 m <sup>2</sup>
B2 Industrial	maximum of one space per 73 m <sup>2</sup>
B8 Storage & Distribution	maximum of one space per 106 m <sup>2</sup>

8.59 Even with a significant change in the use of non-car modes for journeys to work, it may still not be possible to accommodate major new developments upon the road network without causing congestion. As a result, in addition to complying with the maximum parking standards, those developments which will result in an increased demand for travel will be required to support public transport measures in accordance with Policy T1 above.

8.60 Whilst it is not possible to apply the same sort of calculations to other non-residential uses which attract large numbers of visitors, the parking standards can be derived from the following basic principles. Firstly, no new specific parking provision should be made for developments within the town centre for either shopping or leisure uses since both visitors and employees can be catered for within the existing public car parks.

8.61 Secondly, parking provision for new retail developments within district or neighborhood centres should be provided in accordance with the relevant strategy for that centre. Finally, parking provision for new retail warehouses will be assessed on their merits, taking into account such factors as their location, road safety issues, and the level of congestion that they may cause.

8.62 It is recognised that the rigid implementation of minimum parking standards within new residential developments can be over-prescriptive and inflexible. It can also result in an excessive amount of land being given over to the use of the car and can inhibit

innovative designs. As a result, it is proposed to allow for some relaxation in parking standards. In the Town Centre Commercial Core area for example, no specific on-site parking will be required whilst only reduced levels will be required in the rest of the town centre. Elsewhere, it may be appropriate to seek lower parking provision in residential schemes which are well served by public transport or where acceptable higher density developments are being sought in order to optimise the use of housing land. Further relaxations in the standards may also be allowed where dwellings are being extended to a size that would normally require an additional space.

### **Road Safety**

- 8.63 The Highway Authority has a statutory duty under the Road Traffic Act 1988 to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety. Accident investigations are carried out and the appropriate action taken to prevent these recurring, including the provision of local safety schemes which are eligible for Government expenditure support.
- 8.64 Government policy seeks a reduction of all road casualties by one third of the 1981-1985 average level by the year 2000. In Slough there were an average 637 casualties recorded in the 1981-1985 period. Although a number of accident remedial measures have been implemented, a reduction is still needed to meet the target and it is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain a downward trend towards this goal.
- 8.65 There is still a strong commitment to reduce the incidence of personal injury accidents. Education and publicity will play an important part and the need to keep people aware of the number of accidents is an essential element.
- 8.66 A road safety plan will be prepared annually and will set out a programme of measures to promote road safety, having regard to additional targets for a continuing reduction in road accident casualty rates for the period after the year 2000.
- 8.67 Wherever a development is likely to have implications for road safety, the applicant will be required to carry out a Safety Audit and implement any safety measures that are found to be needed.

### **Policy T3 (Safety of Road Users)**

**Planning permission will not be granted for any development which would increase the risk of accidents or endanger the safety of road users including pedestrians, cyclists, and other vulnerable road users or compromise the safety and free flow of traffic.**

### **Protection of the Local Environment**

- 8.68 Unrestrained traffic growth can result in motorists diverting to less suitable routes to save time and this problem of "rat running" already occurs in some parts of the Borough. Residential environments in particular can suffer from this intrusion and it will therefore be necessary to carefully monitor levels of traffic to establish where such diversions may occur. The Council will require major new developments to provide appropriate traffic calming measures in order to limit the impact of any increase in traffic upon local areas.
- 8.69 Traffic management will also play an important part in a balanced consideration of local options for the delivery of improvements in air quality in relation to the Environment Act 1995 and the National Air Quality Strategy. The use of traffic management will be considered an essential element in delivering improved air quality.