

- 7.114 The policy will be monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report and through regular retail health checks and vacancy surveys. The boundaries of the shopping centres will be reviewed in the Development Control and Site Allocations DPD.
- 7.115 The proposed improvements to Slough town centre will be achieved through a combination of public and private development initiatives. The main Queensmere and Observatory shopping centres will be redeveloped and refurbished in accordance with the Master Plan that is currently being prepared by the new owners. This will improve the layout, environment and appearance of the centres and create the opportunity to attract new large anchor tenants. In order to attract more investment into the town and increase its attractiveness, work is due to commence on the "Art@the Centre" environmental improvement project which will transform the pedestrian area of Slough High Street. This will complement the Heart of Slough regeneration scheme which will also have a significant impact upon the environment, image and appearance of the centre. The Heart of Slough will also provide major new community facilities in the proposed new library building. In order to deliver a significant improvement to the overall environmental quality and image of Slough, all of these schemes will be required to comply with the best practice in the design of sustainable buildings and take the opportunity to showcase innovative architecture where this is appropriate to the local context.
- 7.116 The main effect of the implementation of this policy will be to reinforce the dominant role of Slough town centre as the key retail and leisure centre for the town, although the other centres will continue to serve their more local catchments.
- 7.117 The Farnham Road centre is already very elongated and there is not much scope to expand it. It is proposed that the Sainsbury's supermarket should be enlarged in order to enhance its role as the main anchor store for the centre. The council will also support the expansion of the Lidl supermarket. In order to overcome the existing shortage of parking spaces and encourage linked trips, any new parking that is provided as part of new retail development will have to be made available for shoppers using the centre as a whole.
- 7.118 There is even less scope for expanding the Harrow Market shopping centre in Langley. Its role and appearance will be enhanced by the proposed comprehensive redevelopment of the adjoining East Berkshire College site. The longer term possibility of expanding into the Langley Business Park to the north will be considered in the Development Control Policies and Site Allocations DPD.
- 7.119 The Wentworth Avenue shopping centre will be regenerated as part of the Britwell Initiative. Elsewhere all of the existing neighbourhood and local shopping parades will be encouraged to improve the environment and facilities that they provide so that they can adapt to meet the diverse needs of the local population.
- 7.120 There should be no further expansion or intensification of the out of town centre retail parks or individual retail warehouses, which should continue to provide for bulky goods only.

### ***Transport***

- 7.121 Slough is a compact urban area located upon the strategic east-west road and rail network. As a major employment and retail centre Slough experiences significant in and out-commuting which leads to congestion, particularly in peak hours. If unconstrained, the level of traffic in Slough could increase by 20% over the plan period. This is, however, unlikely to happen because of the limited capacity of the road network which has meant that the amount of traffic in Slough has actually fallen slightly in the period from 2000 to 2005.

- 7.122 The future management of the M25, M4 motorways and Great Western rail will be determined by the Highways Agency and Network Rail respectively. It is, however, likely that increased priority will be given to long distance journeys at the expense of more local ones. The way in which competing needs for transport are managed in and around Slough will, however, be critical for the implementation of the Core Strategy and in shaping the future of the Borough.
- 7.123 The main objectives of the policy are to enhance the transport system in Slough by reducing the need to travel and encouraging more sustainable modes of transport. This will be achieved through the application of the Spatial Strategy, which seeks to ensure that the scale of development is related to the accessibility of the site, and through the implementation of the Local Transport Plan (Doc.14).
- 7.124 The Slough Local Transport Plan (Doc.14), in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 13 - Transport (PPG13), seeks to reduce congestion, improve accessibility, create safer roads, improve air quality and mitigate the impact of the transport system on the environment and ensure that it contributes towards broader social and economic objectives. To effectively tackle congestion the plan seeks to widen travel choices by making public transport, cycling and walking more attractive than the private car. Unlike most areas of the country, the patronage of local bus services has increased in recent years which shows how important this can be for reducing congestion, improving accessibility and reducing the impacts of the transport system on the environment.
- 7.125 The Local Transport Plan (Doc.14) also seeks to reduce the demand for the limited road space available in the town centre. This will reduce congestion and help to make travel times more reliable.
- 7.126 Slough has been identified as a "Regional Hub" in the South East Plan (Doc.10). New development will be expected to contribute towards the development of this hub and key transport spokes. A new bus station is proposed as part of the Heart of Slough scheme and improved bus routes will be developed, particularly along the A4 corridor to Heathrow.
- 7.127 The proposed Crossrail link will provide a direct connection from Slough, Burnham and Langley stations to central and east London. The council will also continue to promote the creation of a direct rail link from Slough to Heathrow using part of the West Drayton to Staines line will be promoted in the longer term in order to reduce congestion and promote the economic development of Slough.
- 7.128 The council will also support the establishment of a transport hub within Slough Trading Estate as part of the Master Plan for the comprehensive regeneration of the Estate. It will also support improvements to Burnham station in order to increase its use for people commuting to the Trading Estate.
- 7.129 Slough has successfully reduced the number of traffic collisions involving death or injury in the Borough and is on target to meet the 2010 road casualty target (Doc.14). A range of measures will be needed in order to continue this improvement in road safety.
- 7.130 The Local Transport Plan (Doc.14) has identified a link between the amount of traffic on Slough's roads and an increasing level of pollutants in the town centre, such as carbon dioxide, a contributor to climate change. The plan identifies two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Slough and a third may be declared in the town centre that could limit the scope for development there.
- 7.131 A critical tool for implementing the objectives of the Local Transport Plan (Doc.14) is the control of parking within new development. One of the benefits of concentrating development in the town centre through the Spatial Strategy is that it makes it much easier to apply parking restraint in this area, due to the availability of alternative means of transport. There will also be a parking cap on all new

commercial development outside of the town centre, where no increase in the number of spaces will be allowed. The only exception would be for industrial or warehousing developments, where the lack of sufficient parking could cause operational or road safety problems.

- 7.132 Minimum parking standards may, however, continue to be applied to any small scale residential development that is allowed within the existing residential areas under the Spatial Strategy. This would take account of the expected levels of car ownership and recognise the importance of promoting good design in order to protect the character and amenities of the suburban areas.

#### **CORE POLICY 7 (TRANSPORT)**

All new development should reinforce the principles of the transport strategy as set out in the council's Local Transport Plan and Spatial Strategy, which seek to ensure that new development is sustainable and is located in the most accessible locations, thereby reducing the need to travel.

Development proposals will, either individually or collectively, have to make appropriate provisions for:

- Reducing the need to travel;
- Widening travel choices and making travel by sustainable means of transport more attractive than the private car;
- Improving road safety; and
- Improving air quality and reducing the impact of travel upon the environment, in particular climate change.

Development proposals will also have make contributions to, or provision for:

- The development of Slough town centre as a Regional Transport Hub;
- The improvement of key transport corridors such as the links to Heathrow Airport;
- Improvements to Slough, Burnham and Langley railway stations; and

- The creation of a transport hub within Slough Trading Estate.

There will be no overall increase in the number of parking spaces permitted within commercial redevelopment schemes unless this is required for local road safety or operational reasons. Maximum restraint will be applied to parking for residential schemes in the town centre. In the rest of the Borough, the level of parking within residential development will be appropriate to both its location and the scale of the development and taking account of local parking conditions, the impact upon the street scene and the need to overcome road safety problems and protect the amenities of adjoining residents.

#### **Target:**

- No increase in car parking within employment generating development;
- The number of vehicles entering Slough town centre during the morning peak (7:00am-10:00am) to be a maximum of 30,000;
- The Road Safety target to be a maximum of 25 people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions by 2021; and
- Annual mean NO2 air quality levels to be 35 ug/m3 by 2021.

#### **Indicators:**

- Percentage of new residential development within 30-minute public transport time or 15-minute cycling or walking time of primary schools, Town and District Centres and Existing Business areas (Adaptation of COI 3a);
- The number of vehicles entering Slough town centre during the morning peak (LTP6);
- Road accident casualties; People killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions (BV 99a);
- Annual Mean NO2 levels (LTP6);
- Percentage of completed non-residential development complying with car parking standards set out in the Local Development Framework (COI 3b); and
- Changes in the area-wide road traffic flows.

## Implementation

- 7.133 This policy will be implemented, in conjunction with the other policies in the plan, through the determination of planning applications and the preparation of the Development Control and Site Allocations DPD, Master Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents. All major trip generating developments will be required to submit a Transport Assessment which will identify proposed mitigation measures. Developers will then be expected to contribute towards improved traffic management schemes and improvements to public transport, walking and cycling routes
- 7.134 The policy will also be implemented through the various strategies in the Local Transport Plan (Doc.14), which include those for traffic management, buses, rail, cycling, walking, parking, travel plans, freight, road safety and air quality action plans. Many of these strategies have been drawn up in partnership with key transport providers in Slough such as First Great Western and First Bus who will help to deliver public transport improvements.
- 7.135 The council has commissioned traffic modelling of the proposed distribution of housing and jobs within the Spatial Strategy (Doc.2). This has taken into account proposed developments such as the Heart of Slough and the Slough Trading Estate hub as well as predicted changes as a result of the opening of Terminal 5 at Heathrow. The results of this show that there could be a redistribution of traffic around the town centre as a result of the Heart of Slough with an increase in traffic flows along the Datchet Road and Yew Tree Road. There would be no significant changes in the Trading Estate area and only a very slight increase in traffic flows on the M4 motorway. This will be monitored through the automatic traffic counts and through any specific surveys that are carried out.
- 7.136 All major development proposals will have to produce their own detailed traffic modelling to ensure that there is no significant impact upon the local and trunk road network and to demonstrate how accessibility can be maintained by means other than the private car. This should identify any mitigation measures necessary as a result of the proposals and how they will be implemented.
- 7.137 The council will review its current parking standards and publish them in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document. This will provide the opportunity to review the extent to which additional parking may be allowed in residential areas to overcome road safety and amenity problems. It will also implement its Town Centre Parking Strategy, which has set a limit of 5000 public parking spaces and will continue to expand the number of controlled parking areas within the Borough.
- 7.138 Under the Spatial Strategy the major new residential, employment and retail development will take place in the town centre which will consequently see the greatest increase in demand for travel. The Heart of Slough scheme includes a proposed new bus station and all other developments will be expected to contribute to further transport improvements within the town centre area. The implementation of Crossrail, the proposed new direct rail link to Heathrow and improved rail services to Windsor would all help to develop Slough as a Regional Transport Hub.
- 7.139 The implementation of Crossrail during the second half of the plan period would also significantly improve the accessibility of Langley and Burnham stations which could also then be further developed as local transport hubs.
- 7.140 Any proposals for the regeneration of Slough Trading Estate will have to include an integrated transport package which will reduce reliance upon the private car and improve public transport. This could include the creation of a new local transport hub.



- 7.141 The Local Transport Plan (Doc.14) contains a draft Air Quality Action Plan which sets out measures to tackle air quality problems. Further detailed work will have to be carried out to show how air quality problems in the town centre can be mitigated in order to allow the planned additional development to take place.

### ***Sustainability and the environment***

- 7.142 The improvement of the environment and image of Slough to make it a place that people will want to live, work and visit is of fundamental importance for the delivery of the Spatial Vision. In bringing about this change it is important that development is managed in as sustainable a way as possible.
- 7.143 The principles of sustainability, as set out in PPS 1 - Delivering Sustainable Development, are quite wide ranging in that they include:
- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
  - Effective protection of the environment;
  - The prudent use of natural resources; and
  - The maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.



- 7.144 Climate change is also a fundamental issue for the future planning of Slough. The Core Strategy has therefore taken account of emerging Government policy on climate change and the aim of achieving zero carbon development. Development undertaken at a local level should not make worse the wider impacts of climate change resulting from carbon emissions. Therefore, new development should be constructed in such a manner so as to minimise its impact on the environment both in the short and longer term. This will involve using sustainable design and construction techniques, minimising consumption and waste and incorporating renewable energy technology within development.
- 7.145 The need for sustainable development and to address climate change are cross-cutting issues that are addressed in many of the policies in this document including the Spatial Strategy of concentrating development in the most accessible locations.
- 7.146 The promotion of the good design of buildings and public spaces is important for the implementation of the Spatial Strategy and Spatial Vision for Slough.
- 7.147 The Spatial Strategy of concentrating development in the town centre and the selective comprehensive regeneration of other selected key locations within the Borough is reliant upon there being good design which optimises the use of available land for development and the creation of public spaces. It will require the highest quality architectural designs which will create visually attractive, safe and welcoming environments which positively contribute to improving the sense of place and enhances the image of the area. All developments should also be accessible, sustainable and adaptable.
- 7.148 One of the main "benefits" of the Spatial Strategy is that there will be less need for development in the rest of the Borough. A key part of the Spatial Vision is that the quality of the environment within the existing suburban residential areas will be