

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 An efficient transport system and good accessibility are necessary for economic prosperity and are important for a good quality of life. The policies in this chapter aim to maintain and improve the efficiency of Crawley's transport infrastructure and to ensure that any new development is accessible by all groups of the population. These aims must be reconciled with protection of the environment. The chapter indicates how the demand for car use will be managed and how alternatives to the private car will be promoted. Other chapters support the transport strategy, ensuring allocations for major new developments are in locations which are accessible by a variety of modes of transport.

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- 6.2 Crawley is a very accessible location within the south east region. The M23 and the upgraded A23 provide for road traffic movements from the M25 and the regional motorway network, and to the south coast. The A264 links the M23 directly with dual-carriageways to Horsham and beyond, and a single carriageway A-road to the east of Crawley provides a link to East Grinstead. Rail access is also good with Three Bridges and Gatwick railway stations located on the busiest length of line in the county with direct links to several London termini, to towns surrounding London such as Luton and Reading, and to large centres of population on the south coast. Crawley and Ifield stations are located on the London/ Bognor Regis rail link with regular services passing through Horsham and other towns to the south- west of Crawley. There are, however, no direct rail links to the east of Crawley.
- 6.3 Road access within Crawley is provided by primary distributor roads, which normally define the boundaries of the residential neighbourhoods, and local roads within the neighbourhoods. This hierarchy is not so well-defined in some of the older areas of Crawley. The A23 to the west of the town centre was built in the 1930's as a bypass for the town, but new neighbourhoods have been developed to the west and it now functions as a distributor road. Footpaths and cycle links have been incorporated into the design of several of Crawley's neighbourhoods, but the percentage of people

6.6

STRATEGY, ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

- 6.11 Government and strategic guidance and the Local Plan Strategy emphasise the need to minimise the use of energy expended in transport and to manage the demand for car use in order to protect the environment and promote sustainable development. Other principles of the Strategy are the need to improve the quality of life, equal opportunities, and accessibility for all. Car ownership provides people with the opportunity to travel freely and is a very convenient form of transport. However, not everyone has access to a car and the integration of land use and transportation policy is necessary to ensure development is accessible by a variety of modes of transport. It is also necessary to discourage development which would lead to the generation of significant numbers of car and lorry movements.
- 6.12 It is not possible to fulfill the Local Plan's objectives for transport whilst meeting the demand for all types of transport, and it is therefore important to consider all modes of transport comprehensively. This will enable more energy efficient, sustainable modes of transport to be encouraged whilst others are restrained. West Sussex County Council is promoting comprehensive transport planning through the introduction of urban transport plans in urban areas, and the Borough Council has assisted the County Council in the preparation of a transport plan for Crawley. This develops the policies and proposals of this chapter into schemes for implementation. Funding priorities will be established in the transport plan and some elements may be submitted as part of a package bid for Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions funding.
- 6.13 The transport plan for Crawley will be able to address issues which cannot be covered in the Local Plan, such as improvements to public transport, investigations into new modes of transport including guided bus systems or electric buses, and encouragement of employers to reduce car use through car sharing and similar schemes. These are all important in complementing the Local Plan's transport policies and helping fulfill its objectives. Improvements to rail and bus services and passenger facilities have a particularly important role in supporting the transport policies of the Local Plan. They are more sustainable forms of transport, using less energy and producing less pollution than car use. They, particularly buses, also provide transport for people without access to a car and help reduce congestion and the need for more road space as they have a high passenger carrying capacity. This can release road space for pedestrian and cycle priority schemes. The possible introduction of a park and ride service, and bus priority measures are examples of measures to improve public transport which will be considered. Investigations of alternative transport options, including a new railway station, are also important elements of the new neighbourhood proposals. The transport plan will be complemented by a Surface Transport Plan for Gatwick Airport which will support the policies in Chapter 10 of this Local Plan.
- 6.14 The following objectives provide the framework for the policies of this chapter and have also been reflected in other chapters of the Plan. They will also form the basis of the transport plan. It is not expected that a major change in travel behaviour will take place immediately. However, changes in policy direction are necessary now to ensure future development is increasingly sustainable and accessible to all.

the capacity of existing infrastructure by, for example, encouraging the use of public transport can help reduce the need for infrastructure construction and reduces the use of energy. Safety is also very important, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists who are the most vulnerable road users.

Objective 2

To encourage more sustainable use of transport, reducing energy consumption and pollution.

- 6.16 The transport sector is one of the greatest consumers of energy and is a major contributor to pollution. Addressing these problems by managing the demand for car

POLICIES

TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy T1

In considering proposals for new highways and other transport

Policy T2

Planning permission will not be granted for development which will result in:

- (i) an unacceptable environmental impact caused by traffic, particularly in residential areas;**
- (ii) an unacceptable environmental impact caused by the construction of access roads, or other road improvements necessary for the development;**
- (iii) traffic of excess volume, size or weight using inappropriate roads;**
- (iv) a significant increase in hazards for any road users including pedestrians and cyclists;**
- (v) the closure of a public right of way, unless a suitable alternative route can be provided or it can be demonstrated the route is no longer needed for public use;**
- (vi) a significantly reduced free flow of traffic on a primary distributor.**

Planning permission will not normally be granted for development which requires an access directly onto a trunk road or motorway.

The Borough Council will require improvements to the road, cycle or pedestrian network if these are necessary to overcome any significant adverse impact caused by development.

6.21 Most new development leads to traffic generation, particularly commercial developments which create freight movements or developments which attract a large number of visitors. This traffic, and the construction of new infrastructure to accommodate it, can adversely affect the environment particularly in residential areas. It can also affect the movement and safety of existing road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Development should only be permitted if any significant, adverse impact it causes on the road, cycle or pedestrian network can be overcome without an adverse environmental impact. Increasing road capacity may not be the only or the most appropriate solution. Traffic calming and restraint measures could be introduced to help overcome the problems of increased traffic. Better provision for pedestrians, cyclists or public transport could also reduce traffic generation and the need for increased road capacity.

Implementation: CBC development control process. Developers may be asked to submit traffic impact assessments.

Policy T3

Planning permission will not be granted for development which will attract significant additional freight movements unless it is located close to rail heads or to Advisory Lorry Routes.

- 6.22 Freight movements can have a detrimental effect on the environment and developments which are likely to attract a large volume of freight traffic, e.g. warehousing, should be located where this impact can be minimised. Locations close to rail heads would facilitate freight carriage by rail, in accordance with Policy T25. Locations near to the Advisory Lorry Routes identified by the highway authority (see Appendix 3) would enable lorries to access the strategic road network without using roads which are not designed for this type of traffic.

Implementation: CBC development control process.

Roads**Policy T4**

The Borough Council will encourage the highway authority to maintain and manage Crawley's existing highways so as to ensure the main traffic flows, especially of heavy freight traffic, are channelled on to the strategic network.

- 6.23 Ensuring the majority of traffic, especially freight traffic, uses the main roads is necessary to protect the environment of residential and other areas. This can be achieved by ensuring major routes are well-maintained and by traffic calming and restrictions in other areas. The strategic network in Crawley is illustrated in Appendix 4 and this will receive priority for investment by WSCC in improvements, maintenance and traffic management.

Implementation: WSCC as highway authority.

Policy T5

The routes of the Radford Road link and the M23 slip roads at Maidenbower will be safeguarded.

- 6.24 The Radford Road link is safeguarded because it is an approved Highway Authority road scheme. It will, however, need to be reviewed as part of the access and highway proposals for the new neighbourhood and the route may be altered. The creation of a new junction with the M23 at Maidenbower is a requirement of the consent for development of that neighbourhood, (completed September 1998).

Implementation: WSCC as highway authority, Maidenbower Consortium.

Policy T6

The Borough Council will support the highway authority in improving the access to Tilgate Park, provided the criteria in Policy T1 are met.

- 6.25

numbers are to rise significantly in the future. The possibility of improving access by public transport should also be considered.

Parking Standards

Policy T9

All development will be required to meet its demand for access, usually by the provision of car, lorry and cycle parking to the currently adopted standards.

Within the town centre boundary, the Borough Council will discourage the provision of on-site private non-residential parking and seek its limitation to a maximum of between 40% and 60% of the appropriate standard. Provision below this range may be acceptable. In determining the appropriate level within this range, and the acceptability of lower levels of provision, the Borough Council will take into account the scale, location and accessibility of the development. Parking provision for developments which require parking for public use will not be subject to the above guideline range although lower than the adopted levels of provision may still be acceptable in some cases.

Outside the town centre, where alternatives to access by private car are or can be made readily available, lower levels of on-site private non-residential and public parking provision will be sought for new development, provided the reduction in parking would not result in significant increases in parking on adjoining roads.

Where lower levels of on-site provision are sought or offered, the Borough Council will seek to negotiate commuted payments from

trips into the town centre but it may be acceptable for town centre development requiring parking for public use, (usually retail development), to provide less car parking on-site and instead provide commuted payments to improve alternative means of access or alternative public parking arrangements. This situation will be kept under review. Similarly this approach will be encouraged for non-residential development outside the town centre boundary, but only where alternative means of access can realistically be provided. The measures which commuted payments will be used to fund will normally be identified in the transport plan for Crawley. However, other schemes may also be implemented if they assist meeting the access requirements of the development. In the future, as alternatives to the private car are developed and improved, the levels of restraint and the associated commuted payments will be reviewed. Appendix 2 gives further details about commuted payments.

Implementation: CBC development control process, commuted payments, Local Transport Plan.

Policy T10

Proposals for development on an existing car park used by the public will be permitted if:

- (i) the existing spaces are replaced;**
- (ii) provision is made for the parking required by the new development.**

Commuted sums in lieu of parking spaces may be accepted to provide for alternative means of access or public parking.

6.29 It is necessary to ensure that new development does not lead to a reduction in the stock of car park spaces available for use by the public. This is particularly important within the town centre because several of the allocated development sites are currently public car parks. The loss of these spaces could undermine the viability of the town centre unless alternative means of access or public car parking can be provided directly or through commuted payments. Outside the town centre, the loss of parking spaces used by the public can lead to on-street parking problems in areas where parking is limited. Provision would therefore need to be made for alternative forms of access or parking.

Implementation: CBC development control process.

Policy T11

The Borough Council will not resist the loss of private non- residential car parks in the town centre. Parking standards will have to be met for any new development and commuted payments may be sought to ensure alternative means of transport to the existing development are provided. This requirement will depend on the scale, location and accessibility of the site.

6.30 There is an extensive supply of private car parking associated with existing office and commercial developments in the town centre. This provision makes it more difficult to encourage commuters to travel by public transport, or to walk or cycle and its loss will therefore not be resisted. It may be necessary to improve alternative means of transport to the existing development, to ensure that the parking is not simply

Policy T15

The Borough Council will seek to secure the use of private town centre car parks for the public at weekends. Where new development takes place in the town centre, the Borough Council will seek to ensure on-site parking facilities are designed and laid out so they are suitable for this use.

- 6.34 The parking strategy for the town centre aims to reduce long-stay parking to ensure that the capacity of the public car parks is available for short-stay shopper parking in order to maintain the vitality and viability of the town centre. The overall number of public spaces in the town centre is, however, reducing because of development and it is unlikely to be environmentally acceptable or economic to build sufficient new car parks to meet the demand for short stay parking in the future. Alternative means of transport are being promoted, and park and ride schemes are being considered. Private non-residential car parks are largely unused outside office hours and can, therefore, be a source of short stay parking for shoppers at weekends. Agreements have been entered into with a few town centre occupiers to make their car parks available outside business hours, and further agreements will be sought. It is clear, however, that security reasons dissuade many owners from allowing public use. New car parks, related to development in the town centre, should, therefore, be designed and managed so that they are suitable for public use, wherever possible.

Implementation: CBC Planning and Environmental Services.

Park and Ride Schemes**Policy T16**

A feasibility study of park and ride services for the town centre and Manor Royal will be undertaken. Possible sites will be assessed along major routes into the town and at railway stations, and public consultation will be carried out. If it is justified, the Borough Council will promote the establishment of a service in conjunction with the Highway Authority and private operators.

- 6.35 Park and ride schemes are operating with increasing success in many towns. A park and ride service in Crawley would provide an alternative, more sustainable means of accessing the town centre and would help reduce car use. To be successful, a park and ride service needs to be cheap, convenient, fast, regular and provide secure car parks and good information. It must also be complemented by deterrents to bringing cars into the town centre, including limitations on the availability of long-stay parking space. Locations along the main radial routes into the town centre are being assessed for possible park and ride sites, where traffic entering the town could be intercepted.

Implementation: CBC Planning and Environmental Services, WSCC as highway authority, private landowners.

Residential Parking**Policy T17**

The Borough Council will support the introduction of a controlled parking zone in and around the town centre, with parking permits for residents.

- 6.36 The restriction of long-term parking space within the town centre, in order to help reduce car use, will only be effective if strong control is also exercised over on-street parking in and around the town centre. Several residential areas near the centre already experience problems caused by on-street parking. The restriction of long-term parking in the centre could increase these problems unless on-street parking is controlled in these areas. Such control should be designed to meet the needs of

TRAFFIC CALMING

Policy T20

All major developments will be required to be designed to calm traffic. Traffic calming measures should be considered at the design stage and integrated with parking provision and landscaping. The needs of emergency and service vehicles and public transport should be accommodated.

- 6.39 The calming of traffic to reduce vehicle speeds and improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists is very important, particularly in residential areas. It helps reduce the impact of the car, encourages walking and cycling and improves the local environment. Traffic can be calmed through the use of varying widths, bends and chicanes in street layouts, different road surface materials and landscaping as well as specific features such as road humps and gateway features. The success of these measures varies in different locations, and some may even have a negative impact on the environment in certain areas. For example, road humps have been found to increase air pollution. Any proposal for traffic calming will therefore be considered on its merits.

Implementation: CBC development control process.

Policy T21

The Borough Council will support the highway authority in implementing urban safety management schemes throughout the neighbourhoods and will support policies and programmes to improve and extend pedestrian priority areas.

- 6.40 Urban safety management schemes are currently introducing traffic calming measures into several neighbourhoods. They are being targeted in areas with the worst accident records. The Borough Council considers that schemes should be extended into all other neighbourhoods and residential areas. In addition, schemes are being promoted to improve the pedestrian environment, making it safer, more convenient and therefore more attractive for people to walk rather than drive. Traffic does not have to be entirely excluded from an area as physical changes can be made to reduce the speed and dominance of traffic and to indicate that pedestrians have priority. These improvements can also help improve the viability of shopping areas and are identified in the town centre regeneration strategy, for example, schemes for the High Street and the Broadway. Full consultation with all interested parties will be undertaken on individual schemes before they are implemented.

Implementation: WSCC as highway authority, CBC Planning and Environmental Services.

Policy T22

The Borough Council will support proposals which will prevent or discourage access by heavy goods vehicles to roads not suitable for their use in environmental or traffic terms.

- 6.41 Heavy goods vehicles can have an adverse impact on the environment, particularly in residential areas and the town centre where they create problems of noise, pollution and danger to other road users. Traffic regulation orders can be used to restrict access by lorries in certain areas or at certain times, in order to improve the environment for residents, and for pedestrians and cyclists. Full consultation with all

Policy T25

The Borough Council will encourage the carriage of freight by rail and

Policy T28

All development will be required to provide secure cycle parking facilities to the currently adopted standards. The Borough Council will encourage the provision of facilities in existing developments.

- 6.47 Suitable cycle parking facilities are necessary to encourage cycling as a means of transport. The current cycle parking standards are outlined in Annex 3. Facilities should be secure, convenient and ideally under cover.

Implementation: CBC development control process.

MONITORING

- 6.48 The main test of the success of the strategy adopted in this chapter and of the effectiveness of its policies and proposals, is the extent to which the objectives set out in paragraph 6.14 are met. The basic theme is one of managing the demand for travel and controlling the physical and environmental impact of transport.

- 6.49 A number of policies require monitoring through regular analysis of planning decisions and implementation. In addition, periodic assessment is required of:

- the general situation and opportunities for specific improvements (T5 - T7, T16, T17 - 18, T21 and T26);
- current problems and the effect of changes as shown by, for example, accident statistics (T17, T21 and T22);

the impact of transport development, and measures to mitigate this (T1, T2, T7 and T8); (through detailed survey) traffic and movement demand and facilities (T4, T22, T23, T24, T25 and T26);

- (through detailed survey) parking demand and characteristics.