



Bracknell Forest Borough Local Development Framework

Core Strategy Examination

Topic Paper TP08

Transport

April 2007

Topic Paper 08
Title: Transport

1. Introduction

1.1 This Topic Paper is one of eight produced by Bracknell Forest Borough Council to assist the Public Examination into the Core Strategy, which will commence on 25th June 2007.

1.2 This Transport Topic Paper covers the following policies of the Core Strategy:

CS23 – Transport

CS24 – Transport and new development

1.3 The Council is preparing the following for Examination:

- **The Council's Self Assessment Statement (OD004)**

This is available on the Council's website at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ldf

- **The Topic Papers**

These cover procedural and conformity matters, the main Core Strategy themes and the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area. These will be available on the Council's website and in the Examination Library.

- **Written Statements responding to the Matters and Issues for Examination**

These will provide a detailed response to the separate Matters and Issues which will be identified by the Inspector as the basis for the debate at the Examination (and responding to specific points raised by representations to the submitted Core Strategy). These Statements will rely as far as possible on cross-referencing to the other documents listed above. These Statements will be available on the Council's website by the 24th May 2007.

- **Statements of Common Ground**

These will provide an agreed statement between the Council and specific representors on their representations. These Statements will be available on the website by the 24th May 2007.

1.4 Each Topic Paper is structured to provide:

- A broad summary of the submission representations and the changes sought;
- The broad basis of the Council's case in relation to the representations on this topic including the approach taken by the Borough Council, its conformity with national and regional guidance, and the evidence on which that approach is based.

1.5 Document references in ***bold italics*** relate to documents held within the Public Examination Core Document Library. In general, evidence is based on the following sources:

- Specific studies prepared to address issues to be covered in the LDF;
- Comments received from consultation responses;
- Information and guidance provided by the Sustainability Appraisal; and,
- Existing national, regional and local policies and strategies such as national planning policy statements or the Sustainable Community Plan.

1.6 Procedural and Conformity Matters relating to the Core Strategy are dealt with in a separate Topic Paper 'Topic Paper 1 – Procedural and Conformity Matters' (**TP01**)

2. Background

2.1 The Core Strategy recognises the importance of all forms of transport for local residents and the contribution transport can make to achieving sustainable development. The Transport Theme sets out the two strategic policies that outline our approach to transport and would be applied to development within the Bracknell Forest area. These positive policies have been formulated to promote sustainable development and ensure that all matters related to transport are considered at the strategic through to the detailed level. The policies have been developed within the context of national and regional policies and guidance and have been shaped by the consultations undertaken at the Issues and Options stage and the Preferred Options stage.

3. Summary of Key Issues Raised at Submission

3.1 In general the points raised at submission were;

- that this theme was not strong enough in achieving sustainable development and did not guarantee the future of the current public transport network;
- that Policy CS23 was a set of intentions rather than a set of specific policies and thus did not meet the requirements of PPS12;
- that CS24 was insufficiently precise as to the circumstances in which contributions to transport infrastructure are justified and that cumulative impact was not clearly defined;
- that It is inappropriate for the Local Authority to seek contributions for transport modelling; and,
- that the Sustainability Appraisal should specifically consider the Trunk Road Network.

4. Context

4.1 In developing the Core Strategy transport policies have been created to follow and expand upon the national and regional guidance.

National context

4.2 PPS1 (*Delivering Sustainable Development*) (ND007)

PPS1 states that "*planning should facilitate and promote inclusive patterns of urban and rural development by... ensuring that development supports existing communities and contributes to the creation of safe sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all members of the community*"

Both Policies CS23 and CS24 respond positively to this, in particular the need to create accessibility and reducing the need to travel which contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

PPS1 is supplemented by the draft Planning and Climate Change document "*Consultation-Planning Policy Statement: Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1*" This states that "*all planning authorities should prepare and deliver spatial strategies that...deliver patterns of urban growth that help secure the fullest possible use of sustainable transport for moving freight, public transport, cycling and walking and, overall reduce the need to travel, especially by car.*"

Both Policy CS23 and CS24 are fully consistent with the aims set out in this supplementary document.

4.3 **PPS12 (ND015)**

When considering core strategies **PPS12 (Local Development Frameworks)** sets out in para 2.10 "*The Core Strategy Development Plan Document should draw on any strategies of the local authority and other organisations that have implications for the development of land use e.g. the Community Strategy and Local Transport Plan. Where appropriate the Core Strategy should provide an integrated approach to the implementation of these strategies.*"

In particular Policy CS23 directly reflects the ability land use planning can have in the implementation of sustainable development and the opportunity to help deliver the aims of the Borough Council's Local Transport Plan. It is considered that this policy essentially acts as a hook for later more detailed policies, which will be developed in further Development Plan Documents. Policy CS23 significantly sets out those areas which the Borough Council will concentrate on to achieve sustainable, accessible and safe transport.

4.4 **PPG13 (ND023)**

PPG13 (Transport) is the key guidance document relevant to transport. In general it states when preparing Development Plans local authorities should:

- *actively manage the pattern of urban development;*
- *locate day to day facilities so that they are accessible by walking and cycling;*
- *accommodate housing principally within existing urban areas, locations which are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling;*
- *ensure that development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services offers a realistic choice of access by public transport, walking, and cycling;*
- *in rural areas, locate most development for housing, jobs, shopping, leisure and services in local service centres;*
- *ensure that strategies in the development and local transport plan complement each other;*
- *use parking policies, alongside other planning and transport measures, to promote sustainable transport choices and reduce reliance on the car for work and other journeys;*
- *give priority to people over ease of traffic movement;*
- *ensure that the needs of disabled people as pedestrians, public transport users and motorists - are taken into account in the implementation of planning policies;*

- *protect sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choices for both passenger and freight movements.*

Policies CS23 and CS24, and the Core Strategy as a whole, fully support and at a strategic level, deliver these objectives and thus are fully consistent with this guidance.

4.5 **Circular 05/2005 Planning Obligations (ND016)**

The 05/05 Planning Obligations circular sets out the circumstances where contributions to mitigate unacceptable impacts from new development should be secured. Policy CS24 is consistent with this guidance in that it identifies that transport contributions may be required when impacts from individual development, or developments in combination, may arise. The policy provides a direct link to the Borough Council's Supplementary Planning Document "Limiting the Impact of Development" due to be approved by the Borough Council in July 2007 and any subsequent updates.

Regional context

4.6 **South East Plan (RD001)**

The emerging South East Plan sets out a number of Transport related policies which give guidance to Local Authorities as to the areas they should cover in their Development Plan Documents. In particular, Policy T1 and T5 were relevant in the drafting of policies CS23 and CS24. It is considered that both are consistent with these relevant policies.

4.7 **Regional Transport Strategy**

The Regional Transport Strategy as currently published has been incorporated into the South East Plan. The Transport policies are consistent with this as well.

5. Council Approach

5.1 The Transport chapter of the Core Strategy has been developed in the context of the National and Regional guidance set out above. It has also been shaped by the Issues and Options and Preferred Options stages, other approved Council strategies (including the Local Transport Plan) and the technical background studies that have been developed to inform the Core Strategy as whole.

5.2 **Issues and Options (OD008, OD009)**

At the Issues and Options¹ stage 86% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with promoting alternatives to ease the impact of car use while also planning for car use. 56% agreed or strongly agreed with promoting public transport and using measures to limit the use of the car. More generally, comments were received which suggested: that large scale solutions would only come about through large scale development; there was a need to improve local public transport with further links to development needed; and, measures to reduce congestion and the provision of top class facilities for pedestrians and cyclists are needed.

¹ 'The Context' and 'Your Views' Issues and Options Documents, July 2005

5.3 Preferred Options (**BP010**)

In response to the Preferred Options² consultation there was clear support for the need for Transport Assessments to be undertaken for new development but further clarification was sought for when these should be required and for what level of development. It was also stressed that transport should be a key consideration in the location of new development. Where sites are located close to the Trunk Road Network, a joint approach would be needed to manage demand and funding transport infrastructure improvements.

5.4 Submission Stage

After preferred options the Transport Policy was split into two separate policies, the first dealing with the general approach to transport and the second to deal with transport and new development. With regard to clarification as to when a Transport Assessment is required the policy now makes reference to the guidance set out in the DCLG Circular 01/06 (**ND017**) which sets the criteria for assessing this.

With regard to the Trunk Road Network no specific changes to these policies were made as they are not intended to deal with site specific allocations.

5.5 Implementation and Monitoring

A key element of the new planning system is to ensure that policies are implemented and monitored. The Core Strategy sets out key strategic policies that will guide development in the Borough but which in many instances will be detailed in further Local Development Documents. One of the key mechanisms for the implementation of policies in this Theme (in particular CS24), in addition to determination through planning applications and appeals, is through the preparation of further Local Development Documents. In particular, the Council has identified in its latest Local Development Scheme (April 2007 – March 2010) (**LD008**), Area Action Plans for the two urban extensions. The Amen Corner Area Action Plan commenced in March 2007 and is due for adoption in 2010. The Area Action Plan for land North of Whitegrove and Quelm Park is due to commence in October 2009.

5.51 The approach to monitoring policies is set out in Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy and specific targets and indicators are linked to a number of policies and objectives. At this strategic level, the Council has, wherever possible used the National Core Indicators which establish an overall monitoring framework. Elements of policy CS23 will also be monitored through The Borough Council's Local Transport Plan 2006-11.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Policy CS23 and Policy CS24 have been shaped to;

- promote and fulfil sustainable development principles;
- reduce the need to travel;
- promoting alternatives to the car; and
- mitigate the impacts that new development can have on existing transport services, infrastructure, and transport related environmental factors.

² Core Strategy Development Plan Document: Draft Spatial Framework for Bracknell Forest to 2026
January 2006

This Theme and the policies have been developed in the context of the national and regional policy context and have been informed by the strategic policies previously contained in the Berkshire Structure Plan and the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan.

- 6.2 The policies are wholly consistent with, and support, the Core Strategy vision. In particular, there are clear references in the vision to the provision of transport infrastructure, the need to support existing transport infrastructure and the location of development so as to minimise the need to travel. Appendix 1 attached to this topic paper sets out where policies further supplement the Core Strategy Vision.
- 6.3 With regard to soundness the policies as set out under the transport theme are considered to be;
- consistent with other relevant plans policies and strategies as well as national policy and the regional spatial strategy (*test 4*);
 - coherent and consistent within and between development plan documents produced by Bracknell Forest Borough Council and our neighbouring authorities (*test 6*);
 - appropriate for inclusion within the core strategy having considered alternatives and are founded on a credible and robust evidence base. (*test 7*);
 - capable of implementation and monitoring (*test 8*); and
 - flexible to deal with changing circumstances (*test 9*).
- 6.4 Therefore, the Council feels this approach is sound and consistent with the emerging South East Plan, the Core Strategy Vision and national planning policy guidance. As a result, the Council believes no fundamental changes are necessary to make the plan sound. Minor factual changes may be put to the Inspector for her consideration for purposes of clarity. Where relevant, these will be identified within the Written Statements and/or Statements of Common Ground.

Appendix 1: Links between the Core Strategy Spatial Vision and Core Strategy Policies

The Borough will continue to grow sustainably (CS1, CS10, CS11, CS12), in a planned manner, with new development being directed to sustainable locations (CS2) and having good access to a range of local facilities, services, housing and employment (CS2, CS23, CS24). New development will be located so as to maximise the opportunity to travel by all modes (CS1, CS23) and to improve relative accessibility for all. New development will be mindful of the character of the area in which it sits and will be designed and located such that it will enhance the quality of life in the Borough (CS7).

There will be a continuation of development both within settlements, where appropriate, and outside settlements through planned longer term expansion (CS2, CS3, CS4, CS5). Having had regard to the future development needs, environmental, physical and policy constraints and to an assessment of the level of development that may be accommodated within settlements, land to the west of Bracknell and to the north of Whitegrove and Quelm Park have been proposed for such expansions (CS4, CS5). New housing (CS15) will be targeted to meet the needs of local people and will include a mix of tenures, size and types of unit (CS16, CS17, CS18). New communities will be planned to provide the necessary physical infrastructure (e.g. roads, water) (CS24) as well as the social infrastructure (eg. schools, libraries, leisure facilities, health facilities) to support the community (CS6, CS8, CS13).

The Borough will continue to develop as an important business centre: 'smart' growth will be encouraged whereby businesses maximise the use of technology and human resources rather than additional land resources for sustained economic growth. New employment development will be focussed mainly within Bracknell town centre (CS19, CS20) and the existing employment areas. New housing growth areas will be developed as sustainable communities and may include a mix of uses including employment, leisure and community facilities (CS4, CS5, CS19).

Partnership working will ensure that Bracknell Town Centre is regenerated to provide a mix of homes, shops, jobs and other opportunities that will provide economic, social and environmental benefits to residents, businesses and visitors (CS3, CS19, CS21). The town centre will be easily reached by public transport and have a good standard of access by car. It will also be served by park and ride facilities, for example at Peacock Farm. The town centre will also include a health facility which serves new and existing residents in and around the town centre.

Accessibility to Bracknell will be increased with improved connections to Heathrow through the delivery of the Airtrack proposals (better use of rail connections using mostly existing infrastructure on the Reading to Waterloo line via Staines) along with improved links to London and other areas including the Blackwater Valley (CS23).

The smaller town, village and neighbourhood centres will be maintained and enhanced to provide a valuable role in providing local services and reducing the need for local people to travel for their day to day requirements (CS2, CS21, CS22). A 'design-led' approach to new development will provide a safe and attractive living environment (CS7).

The quality of the environment will continue to improve with the existing high levels of open space and 'greenery' within the settlements maintained and improved (CS7, CS8, CS9). The Green Belt boundary will remain unchanged and areas of important natural and historic interest will be protected, conserved and enhanced (CS1, CS9).

Special attention will be placed on the importance of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (CS14) to ensure that its integrity is maintained whilst allowing sustainable development which meets the needs of the Borough to take place.