

Policy text

8. Traffic and transport

8.1 The Council's planning strategy for enhancing the quality of life and the economy of Bexley is set out in the Part One policies in Chapter 3 of the Plan. Some of these strategic policies concern transport and traffic issues. As transport is a function of land use, the Council recognises the need to ensure integration between transport and land use planning as well as between the different modes of transport. The transport policies in the UDP, therefore, are fundamentally based on the strong linkage between the land use and socio-economic development patterns in the Borough, the demand and supply side of associated transport infrastructure and the resultant problems and issues which need to be addressed. In the light of recent Government policy statements and guidance notes the Transport Strategy of the Mayor of London (2001) and the London Plan (2004), the Council's transport policies have been reviewed, reflecting the key role of transport in regeneration and the need to strike a suitable balance between the need for accessibility and the need to sustain a pleasant environment for all. The appeal of new commercial and residential developments will depend not only on their design and configuration but also on the ease with which they can be reached. Movement within the borough and across its boundary is an important aspect of the borough's life.

8.2 However, freedom of travel is constrained by cost and the nature and capacity of the transport network. A planning strategy must also take account of the environmental impact of transportation on residential areas and other land uses, and on the environment itself. In respect of the environment, the Council will seek to minimise the impact of transport on air quality, nature conservation and the landscape. The Government has asked authorities to have particular regard to the conservation of energy as an issue in development plans, as well as rising levels of congestion.

8.3 A planning strategy should also balance and co-ordinate development and transport policies to ensure freedom of movement is protected beyond the life of the Plan and that the congestion levels encountered in some other parts of London are avoided.

8.4 Co-ordination of land use and transport policy can help increase freedom of choice about how and where to travel for a particular requirement, and increase the opportunities to choose to reduce the length and number of trips. Government advises in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG13) 'Transport' that new development should be guided to locations which reduce the need for car journeys and the distances driven, or which permit the choice of more energy efficient public transport, without encouraging more or longer journeys, as an alternative to the private car.

8.5 This chapter elaborates the planning strategy for transportation set out in Part One Policies G2 and G17-23 by setting out detailed planning policies to achieve the main objectives. These can be summarised as policies aimed at:

- promoting sustainable transport choices, in particular walking, cycling and public transport and reducing reliance on the private car;
- protecting and enhancing the environment and amenity, particularly in residential areas, shopping areas and open spaces;
- optimising the use of the existing transport network (in the context of other constraints and objectives) to meet transport needs in Bexley, paying proper regard to its role within London;
- directing major generators of travel demand to locations where public transport capacity exists or can be created, including town centres and public transport interchanges.
- improving access, safety and comfort, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disabilities and other vulnerable road users;
- regulation of parking to achieve the Council's environmental and transportation objectives; and
- other specific transport matters.

Major Developments

Policy T1

The Council will require applications for major developments to be accompanied by travel plans (formerly termed green transport plans in support of Policies G16 and G17.

Under certain circumstances travel plans may be made binding through either conditions attached to a planning permission or through a related planning obligation.

Policy T2

The Council will require full transport assessments to be submitted alongside applications for major developments.

8.6 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG13) 'Transport' (March 2001) stresses that development has major implications for transport investment and use, and vice versa.

8.7 Transport Assessments will be required for all major developments, including major changes of use, to ensure that there is an understanding of the impact of travel decisions that will arise. These plans will form part of the application and consequent conditions may be attached to any planning permission or incorporated within a related planning obligation. They will be developed in consultation with the Council and local transport providers.

8.8 Transport Assessments will be required for all developments which exceed the thresholds specified in PPG13 (Annex D) and smaller developments that will generate significant amounts of travel e.g. offices, industry, health and education uses.

8.9 Transport Assessments will also be required to assess the implication of a development on the movement of people and goods rather than limited to vehicular movements as implied in earlier Traffic Impact Assessments. This approach is consistent with the Mayor's Transport Strategy. The Assessment will be required to calculate the total number of trips generated by a development and the likely modal split to and from the site. The vehicular movements and level of parking required will be determined from this calculation. Measures required to improve access by public transport, walking, and cycling will need to be identified.

Policy T3

Development proposals likely to be significant generators of travel should be sited in town and district centres and other locations accessible by, or capable of being made accessible by, a range of transport modes, especially public transport, walking and cycling.

8.10 The Government's Planning Policy Guidance highlights the role of land use planning in helping to deliver an integrated transport strategy. Local planning authorities are encouraged to use land use controls to make the fullest use of public transport, focus major generators of travel demand in town and district centres and near to public transport interchanges and co-ordinate growth with public transport improvements. Section 106 agreements may be used to help provide this focus.

8.11 The purpose of this policy is therefore to locate development attracting high numbers of visitors or employees where there is good access to public transport, a public transport access can be improved, and there is also the opportunity for access by walking and cycling. In applying the policy regard will be had to the relatively low level of public transport penetration in parts of the borough. Pending improvements to public transport accessibility in those parts of the borough where it is currently relatively poor, it may be necessary to strike a balance between the availability of suitable sites and local regeneration objectives as set out in the Council's Borough Regeneration Strategy.

Protecting and enhancing the environment and amenity of sensitive areas

Policy T4

The Council will develop and, where appropriate, implement traffic calming and environmental measures on local roads in sensitive areas to protect the environment and help secure a reduction in road accidents in line with the Government's objective of reducing fatal and serious casualties. Traffic calming and environmental enhancement measures will be sought, where appropriate, in new developments.

8.12 Policy T4 elaborates the approach in Policy G21. The Council will promote traffic calming and environmental improvement measures in order to reduce the impact of traffic on the environment, particularly in residential and shopping areas; increase safety for all road users; and reduce accidents. Proposals to enhance residential areas will be brought forward through the Council's Traffic and Environmental Management Schemes (TEMS). Where appropriate schemes will be implemented through the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) and the Council's Environmental Improvements Programme. The layout of new residential areas should be designed to give priority to the safety, amenity and other needs of pedestrians and residents and to protect dwellings from unacceptable levels of traffic noise. This can be achieved by minimising the nuisance and danger caused by through-traffic and by keeping vehicle speeds low. The Council will pay particular attention to the advice in Design Bulletin 32.

8.13 Where the Council is proposing to implement traffic calming measures on roads used by bus routes (or those that might beneficially be used as bus routes), the Council will consult operators/regulatory bodies to ensure that measures used are compatible with passenger safety and comfort and, as far as possible, with bus operations. The Council will develop a road safety strategy, which will contribute to the achievement of the Government's targets for accident and casualty reduction.

8.14 The Council will continue a programme of establishing 'Safer Routes to School' which has already introduced environmental and road safety improvement measures around a number of schools in the Borough. This programme aims to improve conditions for children who already walk or cycle to school and encourage others to join them by providing safe and attractive routes using a combination of measures including traffic calming, walking buses, improved crossing facilities and other environmental improvements. In addition to contributing to the objective of reducing car traffic, the safe routes to school concept will enhance awareness of both school children and their parents of the need to use sustainable transport modes.

Policy T5

The Council will consider implementing traffic measures on local roads to protect and improve air quality particularly in sensitive areas and to achieve national/local air quality objectives

8.15 The possible effects of new road proposals on residential areas are addressed elsewhere in this chapter. In accordance with the requirements of the Environment Act 1995 the Council will review and assess local air quality and will declare Air Quality Management Areas where national objectives are unlikely to be met. Once an Air Quality Management Area has been declared, the Council will develop measures to strive to reduce pollution to meet National Air Quality Standards and include these in an Action Plan.

Optimising use of the existing transport network

Policy T6

The Council will normally refuse any development proposals that would either cause local traffic flows to rise above the design flow for a road or would generate additional traffic on a road on which flows are already considered to exceed design flow, unless:

- 1. either the affected road is included in an improvement programme that would increase the design flows to a level capable of accepting increased demands from the base flow and the development or the applicant is prepared and in a position to undertake un-programmed road improvements, including traffic management and environmental measures, to increase the design flow capacity of relevant highway links to a level capable of safely accommodating increased demands from the development; and**
- 2. there are no environmental, or other planning or road traffic objections to such highway improvements taking place.**

(Calculation of base flow shall take account of developments permitted but not yet implemented.)

8.16 Policy T6 applies the general policy approach of Policy G2 to the borough road network. It is needed because the Council's resources for road improvements are limited and provides that the amount of new

development permitted must be related to the traffic flows on surrounding roads. Failure to do this would lead to traffic congestion, delay and harm of the environment. It also applies the general principles for the management of transport infrastructure included in Policy G21. A key consideration in determining the impact of a development proposal on the transport network is the present and potential availability of public transport to serve the development. The impact of a development on the surrounding road network will be lessened where public transport services are, or could be capable of carrying some of the trips generated by it. In examining development proposals the Council will have regard for this. It will also consider the impact which any traffic generated by them will have on the operation of bus services. Where it can be shown that a proposed development will have a detrimental impact on the operation of bus services the Council will seek measures, to be funded by the developer, to protect bus operation by way of planning agreements.

Policy T7

The Council will promote the construction of, and safeguard land needed for, the following highway schemes, as shown on the Proposals Map:

- 1. A206 improvement of Thames Road (completion of dualling of the South Thames Development Route, west of the M25);**
- 2. a road linking James Watt Way with Manor Road (in the vicinity of Turpin Lane); and the**
- 3. A223 Bexley bypass.**

Highest priority will be given to the A206 Thames Road Improvement Scheme.

8.17 Major improvements to the efficiency of the overall road network and environmental benefits can be obtained from enhancement to relatively small parts of the existing network. Each will enable specific planning objectives to be achieved, for example the regeneration of industrial areas and town centres and the relief of known traffic bottlenecks.

8.18 Thames Road forms part of the A206/A2016 South Thames Development Route, which links the M25 with the South Circular (A205) and from there, the Blackwall Tunnel. This joins the Borough of Bexley, and in particular the Belvedere Employment Area and other industrial areas in the north of the borough, with Kent and the rest of London. Over the last few years, most of the route has been upgraded to dual carriageway. Thames Road (a 1.6km stretch) is the last section of the route west of the M25, which needs improving. It is the only single carriageway section of the South Thames Development Route and the road itself is worn out and in urgent need of reconstruction.

8.19 Dualling of Thames Road would:

- ensure that the full benefits of regeneration programmes in the Thames Gateway are realised;
- allow the full realisation of the true value of the considerable investment that has already taken place along other stretches of the South Thames Development Route (STDR); and
- contribute to the integration of transport facilities.

8.20 Unless Thames Road is dualled, existing congestion will increase considerably not only deterring new development but also undermining the viability of existing industrial activity. The scheme is consistent with Government advice and will improve employment prospects, and help to reduce traffic and air pollution on residential roads near Thames Road.

8.21 The transport corridor formed by the South Thames Development Route (STDR) and the route of the proposed Crossrail links all the major sites for redevelopment and regeneration in the Thames Gateway south of the Thames. Traffic levels using the route have increased as developments such as the Dartford Northern Bypass and Bluewater have been completed. With the prospect of other developments being completed over the next few years, and the impacts of new or improved river crossings, the already serious traffic congestion and delays on Thames Road will get worse.

8.22 Outside of Bexley, Thames Road is expected to have significance for the development of the Woolwich Royal Arsenal (77 acres), Greenwich Peninsula (300 acres excluding the Millennium Dome), Gallions Reach Urban Village (130 acres) and the London Science Park (575 acres). Consequently, the dualling of Thames Road will make a significant contribution towards bringing forward these sites, which are of a size to make a major impact on the regeneration of the Thames Gateway sub-region.

8.23 The Thames Road proposals complement other schemes being pursued, which include Crossrail linking with the Woolwich Rail Tunnel, the long-term extension of the Waterfront Transit scheme from the Millennium Dome site to Erith and possibly Dartford, and improving bus links between stations and employment areas with better access for pedestrians, cyclists and bus passengers. These proposals will reduce the level of car traffic, but there is still a requirement to provide access for freight vehicles and improved facilities for local cyclists and pedestrians. Key features of the widening scheme are the improvement of facilities for these groups and a reduction in congestion to allow improved journey times and reliability for bus passengers and freight services. It will also help to minimise the traffic that uses other local roads as 'rat-runs' thus improving the local environment for the residents.

8.24 The South Thames Development Route is a key part of London's freight lorry network. It provides an essential link from the major industrial areas of Belvedere to the national motorway network at the M25, and thus to the Channel ports and tunnel. The congestion and delays currently suffered by these delivery lorries on the bottleneck at Thames Road serve to deter business investment and threaten existing jobs.

8.25 Traffic on Manor Road passes through a residential area at the western end of Manor Road. Residents of that area experience significant environmental and safety problems associated with traffic. A new road (James Watt Way) has been constructed to serve the Deep Wharf site and the industrial traffic using Appold Street. This provides a link to Queens Road, avoiding the need for this traffic to use the residential part of Manor Road. However, many industrial sites are still served by Manor Road and this results in its use by a large number of lorries. The results of a survey of local air quality in Manor Road, indicate that at residential premises fronting the carriageway, levels of airborne dust experienced will cause nuisance to the occupiers. In addition, levels of respirable dust (PM10) occurring at these residential properties may well exceed national air quality standards. As a result of this survey the area has now been designated an Air Quality Management Area. The Council will develop and include proposals to reduce levels of air borne dust in an action plan. It is believed that goods vehicles may contribute significantly to the levels of respirable dust measured in Manor Road. The road also has a poor accident record, especially for child pedestrians, in James Watt Way. This road provides an opportunity to serve the north-western part of Manor Road and, potentially, could be linked to provide an alternative route which bypasses the residential part of Manor Road. The Council is giving further consideration to this matter and may in due course bring forward a specific alignment and related safeguarding policies.

8.26 The Bexley bypass is needed to complete the high capacity route linking the A2 and the A20 and improve north-south links in the borough generally, and to relieve the historic village centre and Conservation Area at Old Bexley of through traffic.

Policy T8

Subject to a satisfactory Traffic and Environmental Assessment and arrangements for promotion, the Council will safeguard land for the Greenwich Waterfront Transit Scheme.

8.27 Greenwich Waterfront Transit is an intermediate mode (tram or guided bus) proposal between Greenwich and Abbey Wood with a further extension to the east of Abbey Wood a possibility. A further eastward extension to Belvedere and Erith, and possibly beyond, would be supported by the Council. It is being developed by Transport for London (TfL), the London Borough of Greenwich and this Council and will run on segregated track, either on the highway or on a new alignment.

8.28 The development of the scheme is still at the feasibility stage and detailed design of the alignment, environmental assessments and property requirements are still under investigation. In this Borough the alignment is essentially within the existing highway but highway changes may require some additional property. The Council has agreed to safeguard an alignment subject to the production of satisfactory traffic and environmental assessments and agreement on suitable arrangements for promotion including funding.

Policies to improve and protect public transport

Policy T9

The Council will promote and support the maintenance and improvement of public transport services that will improve access to town centres, employment areas and services within the borough and commuter services for borough residents, including:

- 1. public transport links across the river, downstream of Greenwich, e.g. a new rail link from Thamesmead to Docklands;**
- 2. upgrading of station facilities and services on lines through the borough;**
- 3. improvements to the bus network;**
- 4. implementation of the London Bus Priority Network;**
- 5. intermediate mode proposals for the Greenwich to Erith Corridor; and**
- 6. riverbus services to provide additional capacity for journeys to central London, Docklands and Thames Gateway developments in line with employment growth;**

subject to an environmental impact assessment where appropriate.

Policy T10

The Council will oppose any reduction in the capacity of passenger or freight rail services to and from stations or freight depots that serve this borough.

8.29 Public transport is important for borough residents, not only for the large number of people working in central London and elsewhere who travel to and from work by rail or bus, but also to those for whom it is the only means of travel. Public transport is also important to local businesses, assisting clients, customers and visitors and enabling them to recruit from a larger catchment area. Public transport also improves access to shopping centres and other community facilities. Whilst the Council has no direct control over public transport, it will, through established consultative channels, draw to the attention of Transport for London and the rail operators, deficiencies in the services as they arise. The Council is particularly conscious of the shortcomings of railway stations in terms of: interchange; passenger information; comfort; toilet facilities and safety. There is also a need to enhance the safety and attractiveness of pedestrian routes approaching railway stations. Upgrading of stations and their environs should be to the standard required to achieve Secure Station accreditation. There is considerable scope to improve the ease with which disabled travellers and those carrying luggage can move between station platforms, roads and footpaths. Ease of access has become particularly important for people with disabilities, as many stations are un-staffed and help from station staff is unavailable.

8.30 The London Bus Priority Network has been successful in improving conditions for buses and bus passengers. Bus service improvements are being achieved by measures implemented as part of this programme. Further improvements would be achieved if an intermediate mode (e.g. tram or guided bus) were introduced.

Policy T11

Where improvements to public transport and/or other modes of travel are required as part of a development proposal, the Council will expect the development to provide these improvements or to make financial contributions for these purposes by way of a legal agreement.

8.31 Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG13) 'Transport' states that it is appropriate for planning obligations to be used to achieve improvements to public transport, walking and cycling, where such measures would be likely to influence travel patterns to the site involved. Examples given include improvements to a bus service or cycle route, which goes near to the site, or pedestrian improvements, which make it easier or safer to walk to the site from other developments or from public transport.

8.32 The planning obligations will be designed to secure adequate accessibility to sites by all modes, with the greatest emphasis on achieving the greatest degree of access by public transport, walking and cycling. Developers will be expected to contribute more to improving access by such sustainable transport modes for development on sites that are ill-served in this regard. Where developments can only take place with improvements to public transport services, a contribution from the developer will be appropriate. This will normally be based on an agreed transport impact assessment.

Policy T12

The Council will seek to improve public transport capacity and services, information, security and interchange facilities especially when development proposals are under consideration.

The Council will take into account the needs of bus operators and passengers when designing highway, traffic and environmental schemes, and will require the same of developers, by:

- 1. providing for bus route requirements in major developments and associated road layouts;**
- 2. locating bus stops as close as possible to passenger destinations, crossing facilities and focal points in the pedestrian network; and**
- 3. providing safe and convenient approaches to stations and bus stops.**

8.33 In the absence of underground rail facilities and given the inadequate provision of surface rail connections, bus services generally provide the best and most readily adaptable way of meeting public transport needs within the borough. Many people, particularly the very old and the young, do not have access to a car, or only have occasional access to one. They are, therefore, dependent on public transport, especially buses. Better public transport facilities are vitally needed to provide an acceptable alternative to the use of the car. To facilitate their use of the public transport network, it is essential to provide adequate capacity and services, information, security and interchange facilities. The provision of the latter can also assist in enabling centres to develop their commercial potential, as at Bexleyheath.

8.34 In all its dealings with developers, bus operators, tendering bodies and partners in environmental improvement schemes, the Council will seek to ensure the conditions necessary for an accessible and attractive network of frequent and reliable bus services to be run. This includes taking account of bus route requirements in road layouts associated with new developments and by encouraging the advantageous location of stops (in the context of traffic and other safety considerations).

8.35 Whilst public transport facilities in the borough do not compare well with those in Central and Inner London, parts of the borough are relatively better served than others. Analysis of the bus and rail services in the borough has identified the locations where services interchange to enable travel, in broad terms, in all four directions. Appraisal of the number of bus and train departures in the evening peak (16.31 - 18.30 hours) gives a relative and reasonable indication of which are the most accessible locations in the borough by public transport. These locations are shown in the following table. Transport for London (TfL) has developed a computer model, which ranks the weekday rush hour scheduled availability of buses and trains on a scale of 0-6 (6 being the highest accessibility), representing a site's Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL). The model also takes into account the time and difficulty of walking to the nearest bus stop or train station.

8.36 The relatively better public transport accessibility means that these locations are particularly suitable (subject to other provisions of the Plan) for the location of traffic-generating uses because the potential exists for visitors to choose to use public transport as an alternative to the private car; and they are more accessible for those without use of a car. This develops the theme identified in Part One Policy G21 and the Government's advice contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG13) Transport.

Table 8.1

Public Transport Accessibility (PTAL) index - weekdays, morning rush hour

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 4 | Bexleyheath Town Centre | 2 | Welling Town Centre - west end |
| 3 | Crook Log | 2 | Abbey Wood |
| 3 | Sidcup Town Centre | 2 | Erith Town Centre |
| 2 | Sidcup Station area | 2 | Crayford Town Centre |
| 2 | Welling Town Centre - east end | 2 | Lower Belvedere |

Levels range from 0-6 (6 being the highest level)

The PTALs contained within Table 8.1 represent an average score across the town centre. Site-specific PTALs will be calculated for individual development sites.

8.37 Recent Government advice indicates that new development should be guided to locations which reduce the need for car journeys and the distances driven or which permit the choice of more energy efficient public transport, without encouraging more or longer journeys as an alternative to the private car. These locations have evolved as nodes of public transport and can also offer advantages in enabling one journey (however small) to serve several purposes.

8.38 The Council's strategy for the structure of the borough has identified town centres and Neighbourhood Centres as the most appropriate locations for shopping and other service provision used by the public. Town centres are also appropriate locations for many other employment-generating uses. Chapters 9 and 11 of the Plan develop these themes.

Policy T13

The Council will seek to promote a mix of land uses, including residential, in town and local centres, which reduces the need to travel and encourages the use of public transport, walking and cycling.

8.39 Town and local centres generally have the highest levels of public transport accessibility. Focusing major generators of travel demand in these centres will allow a greater use of public transport, walking and cycling and therefore result in less reliance on the private car. It will also improve social inclusion, as the facilities will be more accessible to people from deprived areas by bus and to those without access to a car.

8.40 Careful design of a mix of land uses will reduce the need to travel by locating employment, retail and other uses close to people's homes. This will allow more trips to be made by walking and cycling, help the renaissance of towns and local centres and reduce congestion and pollution.

Improvement of the safety and convenience of travel

Policy T14

The Council will take account of the needs of cyclists in the design of highway and traffic management schemes and support the development of both strategic and local cycle networks to provide safe, convenient routes both within the Borough and linking with routes in adjacent boroughs and districts. The Council will seek to provide for and promote cycling in development proposals by requiring as appropriate:

- 1. the provision of safe and attractive cycle routes both within major developments and linking to existing or planned cycle networks;**
- 2. the provision of convenient and secure cycle parking in accordance with the cycle parking standards set out in Annex 1 to this chapter.**

8.41 The Council will encourage the use of cycling, as it is healthy, non-polluting and environmentally friendly. Special provision may encourage the use of cycles and increase its safety. In particular, the Council supports the creation of the 1,000 miles strategic cycle route network for London and will complete the long distance Thames Valley cycle route along the Thames, taking into account the Thames-side policies in Chapter 12 and any other relevant policies in the Plan. The Council recognises that cyclists are a particularly vulnerable class of road user. Consideration will also be given to the needs of cyclists in the application of traffic management schemes, at high-risk sites and in highway improvements, although the provision of entirely separate facilities is not always justifiable on economic grounds or practical in terms of physical space. In conformity with Policy T16, due consideration will be given to avoid any conflict between the safety of pedestrians and cyclists whenever a shared path is used for both of these groups.

8.42 The needs of cyclists will be included in Transport Assessments and in the consideration of provision of cycle routes within the development of, and links to, existing or proposed cycle networks. The absence of convenient cycle parking and changing facilities can be a major deterrent to cycle use. Therefore the Council will require the provision of convenient and secure parking and changing facilities in new developments and the provision of cycle storage facilities at transport interchanges.

Policy T15

The Council will seek to meet the accessibility needs of disabled people in the design of highway and traffic management schemes and in development proposals by:

- 1. promoting public transport and interchange facilities that are accessible to disabled people;**
- 2. requiring provision of convenient, designated disabled parking spaces to meet needs; and**
- 3. designing pedestrian routes and crossings which are safe and convenient for use by disabled people where appropriate.**

8.43 The Council wants developments and public transport that are accessible to disabled people and a pedestrian environment that enables them to reach and make use of them. For some disabled people there is no substitute for the private car and therefore their needs in terms of access arrangements and parking spaces will need to be taken into account in any development. There will need to be adequate numbers of suitably designed parking spaces for motorists with disabilities.

8.44 Attention will also have to be given to the needs of disabled people in the design, layout and physical conditions in any development. In particular, town centres and residential areas will require well-defined and safe access arrangements for disabled motorists and disabled pedestrians, particularly those who are blind or partially sighted.

Policy T16

The Council will seek to improve the environment for pedestrians and reduce the risk of accidents to pedestrians by means of:

- 1. adequate and safe crossing facilities, where necessary;**
- 2. giving priority to the needs of pedestrians, including people with disabilities, in highway and landscape design; and**
- 3. environmental enhancement schemes in areas of high pedestrian activity such as shopping streets.**

8.45 All trips start and end with a pedestrian element, many trips being entirely pedestrian. The Plan will encourage pedestrian movement and aims to improve pedestrian safety and convenience. The development of a pedestrian network using the Green Chain, open spaces, and other green corridors can provide many benefits. Similarly environmental improvements to shopping streets will bring considerable benefits in terms of townscape, amenity and safety.

Regulation of vehicle parking

8.46 Part One Policy G23 sets out seven six broad objectives which the Council's policies and standards to regulate on and off-street vehicle parking can help to achieve:

- the promotion of sustainable transport choices, in particular: walking, cycling and public transport;
- the protection and enhancement of the environment and amenity, particularly of shopping, residential areas and open spaces;
- the encouragement of shared use of parking, particularly in shopping centres and as part of major proposals;
- no more parking spaces to be provided as part of a development than a transport assessment may justify or, where a transport assessment is not required, no more parking spaces are provided than prescribed in parking standards;
- the orderly flow of traffic and the safety of pedestrians, people with disabilities, wheelchair riders and other road users; and
- the development of the local economy and access to jobs, services, shops and recreational facilities;

8.47 In central and inner London the use of parking controls as a means of traffic restraint is often emphasised to encourage car drivers, usually commuters, to use public transport instead of the private car. Traffic patterns in the Borough are very different to those in central London and road congestion is of a different nature and less extensive. However, traffic speeds are decreasing, and congestion is a problem that

Bexley's strategy does address. The Council considers that objectives can be best achieved by the adoption of policies to prohibit development that would create the congestion, and create and protect opportunities for travellers to choose to use public transport and thus minimise congestion. Parking standards are therefore set to achieve the objectives of Policy G23. The Council's complementary strategy for on-street parking control is covered in the Council's Local Implementation Plan.

Policy T17

Applicants should make provision for off-street car parking spaces in their developments, including applications for changes of use, up to the maximum levels of parking prescribed in Annex 1 to this chapter, unless a Transport Assessment of the development indicates the need for higher levels of parking.

In the case of smaller developments, the applicant may be required to demonstrate how the travel needs arising from the development will be met in circumstances where there are concerns about the impact of on-street parking on amenity and traffic flow.

Parking spaces should be located so as to discourage on-street parking and respect the amenity of near-by residents.

8.48 Borough residents and businesses rely on the private car to a greater extent than those in many other London Boroughs. Housing densities are lower, bus services are unevenly spread, with some areas relatively poorly served, and the railway services generally only provide for east-west travel. Yet the Council is also aware that the availability of off-street parking spaces can have an influence in the travel choices people make for their journeys. Car parking also takes up valuable space and can be unsightly.

8.49 A balance has to be struck between providing adequate levels of parking to meet economic and regeneration objectives and encouraging people to walk, cycle or use public transport to avoid the environmentally damaging effects of traffic. Government policy encourages a reduction in the amount of parking in new development as part of a package of planning and transport measures to promote sustainable travel choices. The Council's parking policies therefore comply with objectives of Government guidelines whilst having regard for the individual circumstances of development proposals.

8.50 The parking standards in Annex 1 are based on the Government guidelines. The standards will be reviewed in the light of the London Plan. Meanwhile, with the exception of the cases referred to in para. 8.51 below, the standards should apply as a maximum level of provision unless an applicant has demonstrated that, after taking appropriate measures to minimise the need for parking, a higher level of parking is required. Transport Assessments will be required for larger developments (Policy T2) and Travel Plans may be required to show how the travel needs of users of a development will be met (Policy T1). In the case of smaller developments there will be circumstances where even small increases in car use will aggravate traffic congestion and impact on residential amenity. Where this is suspected, applicants will also be asked to show how the travel needs of their developments will be met so that their impact can be assessed.

8.51 Minimum levels of parking provision will apply to parking spaces for disabled people and to provision for cyclists and lorry parking. The design of car parks should comply with relevant design standards, including Secure by Design.

Policy T18

The Council will encourage the shared use of parking facilities. Where retail and leisure developments are located in or on the edge of, a town centre, the Council may allow parking spaces additional to the maximum standards prescribed in Annex 1 provided:

- 1. the Council is satisfied the additional spaces genuinely serve the town centre as a whole;**
- 2. the scale of parking proposed is consistent with the size of the town centre; and**
- 3. the applicant has formally agreed to the additional spaces being available for use by the general public in accordance with the Council's parking strategy.**

8.52 Shared use of parking spaces can reduce the overall parking requirement by enabling their more efficient use. Parking spaces could, for example, be made available for evening leisure uses when shops

have closed. Car parks can be located in edge of centre locations close to main roads to reduce the traffic congestion in the centre itself. To encourage more shared use, the Council is prepared to allow parking spaces in addition to those prescribed in Annex 1 if the spaces genuinely serve other town centre users. This approach is consistent with the Government's own planning policy guidance on parking policies.

Policy T19

Where development proposals include vehicle parking spaces that would be available for use by the public, agreements will be sought to ensure that the management and charging policies are in accordance with those operated by the Council within the vicinity. The Council will seek to prioritise parking space use, giving priority to shoppers and other short-term users.

Policy T20

The Council supports the control of on-street parking where this is necessary, to ensure the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians and vehicles, to facilitate bus operation, to maintain essential access to premises fronting the highway or to improve the environment. The Council will continue to control on-street parking through Controlled Parking Zones and will consider the extension of existing or the introduction of new zones in areas of high parking demand, especially in and around town centres.

8.53 The Council acknowledges the need for efficient management of on-street parking in certain locations. On-street parking restrictions will continue to apply in all the borough's main shopping centres to facilitate servicing and access and to maintain safe and pleasant conditions for all road users, including pedestrians. Parking restrictions to control the length of stay have a role to play in ensuring ready access for customers to shops and other facilities in town centres and other locations. Parking and loading controls also have a role to play in facilitating bus operation and supporting bus priority measures. (See Appendix K for map showing existing and proposed Controlled Parking Zones.)

Policy T21

The Council, subject to environmental and other policy considerations, will give sympathetic consideration to the provision of additional parking spaces at, or close to railway stations in the borough provided that management and pricing policies do not encourage journeys by car from outside the borough.

Policy T22

The Council is opposed to the change of use or redevelopment of existing railway station car parks unless suitable replacement spaces are provided.

8.54 Commuter parking in roads adjacent to several railway stations in the borough causes residents and local businesses annoyance and inconvenience and has been the subject of many complaints. The Council has successfully introduced short-term waiting restrictions or off-peak parking control zones at the busiest stations and intends to introduce off-peak control zones around other stations to overcome the nuisance of all-day parking by commuters. The provision of off-street parking spaces close to these stations would complement the controls by providing an alternative to street parking. Particular encouragement will be given to the establishment or retention of bus services to, and cycle parking provision at, stations.

Other specific transport matters

Air traffic and hovercraft

Policy T23

The Council will oppose applications to construct or intensify the use of facilities designed for regular use by hovercraft, aeroplanes or helicopters unless adequate environmental safeguards are applied to limit the noise and nuisance caused by their routine operation. In assessing any such proposals account will be taken of the approach and departure routes of any aircraft or hovercraft likely to use the facility and of the importance of limiting noise nuisance outside normal working hours.

8.55 Aircraft and helicopters are increasingly used for business or recreational purposes. Helicopters and microlights can be operated from much smaller sites than conventional aircraft. Both categories of aircraft can cause considerable noise nuisance in certain situations. The borough already experiences some noise nuisance from aircraft approaching or departing from London City Airport, Biggin Hill, Gatwick and Heathrow.

8.56 Increased road traffic congestion has led to greater helicopter use by the emergency services in and around London. The Council is concerned to minimise the potential nuisance arising from all industrial and transport activities, particularly in residential areas and in the Metropolitan Green Belt. Any site proposed for aircraft, helicopter or hovercraft operations will be assessed in relation to surrounding land uses as existing or approved. The potential benefits of such proposals for the emergency services, public utilities, the economy and recreational opportunities will also be considered.

Freight**Policy T24**

The Council will, subject to environmental and other policy considerations, encourage proposals that support the carriage of freight by rail or river transport. It will seek to preserve existing rail and water freight facilities from redevelopment for other uses where there are realistic prospects of future use of the facilities.

8.57 Although most goods movement is door-to-door for which road freight is the most suitable, there are some cases where rail and river transport offer advantages. This is particularly the case in the transport of bulk materials such as aggregates, cement, refuse, oil and grain. In these instances the provision of rail sidings and terminals and riverside wharves can remove heavy goods traffic from congested and unsuitable roads. The Council will generally support applications to the Department of Transport for assistance with the costs of sidings or other rail freight facilities.

8.58 In some circumstances it may be necessary to limit the hours of operation of new wharves or railway sidings or related facilities and machinery in the interests of residential amenity.

ANNEX 1 - PARKING POLICY STANDARDS

8A.1 These Standards form part of Policy T17 and are designed to achieve the policy objectives established under Part One Policy G23 and Chapter 8 of this Plan. In particular, paragraphs 8.46-8.53 set out the Council's policies to regulate on and off-street vehicle parking to achieve a range of planning, environmental and transportation objectives.

8A.2 In essence, these standards seek to promote sustainable transport choices as part of a package of planning and transport measures.

8A.3 The parking standards are maximum standards unless otherwise stated. They will be applied to all new development, redevelopment, including extensions and proposals for change of use.

8A.4 In applying the car parking standards to individual site proposals, the Council will take into account the following factors:

- the availability of public transport;
- the need to encourage regeneration of sites in the Thames Gateway as identified in regional and sub-regional plans as priority areas for regeneration and development;
- the presence of on-street parking controls to deter parking; and
- the availability of public off-street parking opportunities.

8A.5 Where an application proposes uses falling within more than one Use Class, the parking standards will be applied as appropriate for each use.

8A.6 The potential scale of development of any site may also be constrained by the capacity of the local highway and public transport network. Policies aim to minimise the impact of traffic, make optimal use of the existing transport network and direct development accordingly.

8A.7 Standards are set for the more common forms of development. No specific standards are set for other forms of development that occur less frequently, but parking provision will be required at a level to achieve the policy objectives of the Plan.

8A.8 Planning conditions will normally be imposed to safeguard the proper use of vehicle parking and servicing facilities.

8A.9 All parking requirements will be rounded to the nearest whole number (0.5 is rounded up). In certain circumstances provision for parking to cater for part-time staff will be calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents (FTE).

8A.10 To ensure appropriate parking provision, where a development consists of several clearly identifiable separate units, the parking provision will be assessed for each individual unit according to its size and use. Spaces provided should be conveniently sited in relation to each unit served and indicated on an agreed allocation plan. Where a single larger unit could be subdivided, a condition or a legal agreement may be used to prevent sub-division where this may affect the agreed off-street parking arrangements.

Provision for people with disabilities (minimum standard)

8A.11 The relationship between car ownership and the number of registered disabled drivers in the borough indicates that approximately 4% of parking spaces should be designed for use by people with disabilities and half bays rounded up to the nearest whole number. Disabled parking provision will be calculated on the basis of the Council's standards as set out in subsequent paragraphs. This will be applied as a minimum parking standard and may be exceeded. These should be clearly marked and reserved for the use of people with disabilities. They should be located near to the entrance of the buildings for which they are provided. Design and Development Control Guideline No.4 provides further advice on the design of parking spaces for disabled people.

Parking Dimensions

8A.12 Parking bay sizes are normally 2.4m wide x 4.8m long except where such bays are positioned parallel to the kerb where bay sizes should be 1.8m wide and 6.0m long.

8A.13 Parking bays for disabled people should normally be 3.6m wide x 4.8m long to provide sufficient room for side transfer between wheelchairs and cars or light vans. One, 1.2 metres wide, transfer space may service two parking bays.

8A.14 Heavy goods vehicle parking bays should normally be 3.5m wide x 15.25m long but can be varied accordingly to the type of vehicle expected to use them.

Cycle Parking

8A.15 Secure cycle parking should be incorporated in new developments that have the potential to attract cyclists.

8A.16 **CYCLE PARKING STANDARDS** (minimum provision)

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|
| Business Offices, Services | B1/A2 | 1 space per 150m ² |
| Light Industrial | B1 | 1 space per 600m ² |
| General Industry | B2 | 1 space per 600m ² |
| Warehouses | B8 | 1 space per 600m ² |
| Pubs, restaurants & take-aways | A3 | 1 space per 250m ² |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------------------------------|---|
| Shopping | A1 | Food retail | Out of town -1/350m ² Town centre -1/125 m ² |
| | A1 | Non-food retail | Out of town - 1/500m ² Town centre -1/300 m ² |
| | A1 | Garden Centre | 1/300 m ² (min. 2 spaces) |
| Education | D1 | Primary School | 1 space per 10 staff |
| | D1 | Secondary School | 1 space per 10 staff /students |
| | D1 | Colleges | 1 space per 8 staff /students |
| Other non -residential institutions | D1 | 1 space per 500m ² | |

Heavy Goods Vehicles (minimum provision)

8A.17 Parking provision for lorries and other heavy goods vehicles within the boundaries of development sites should be made in accordance with the standards set out in the tables below. These apply as minimum standards

RESIDENTIAL CAR PARKING STANDARDS (maximum provision)

8A.18 New dwellings

| | Town centres & locations well served by public transport | Elsewhere |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| with 1-2 habitable rooms | 1 car space per dwelling | 1.3 car spaces per dwelling |
| with 3 -4 habitable rooms | 1.5 car spaces per dwelling | 2 car spaces per dwelling |
| with 5 or more habitable rooms | 2 car spaces per dwelling | 2 car spaces per dwelling |

8A.19 "Habitable room" is defined as all rooms used for living purposes except a kitchen of floor area less than 13m², bathrooms, toilets, corridors and halls. Any room of 28m² or more will be treated as two habitable rooms.

8A.20 Policy standards for new dwellings apply to all new build and material changes to the use of existing buildings, sub-division or conversion to create independent dwellings.

8A.21 The Council will normally require independent access to each car parking space and, therefore, tandem parking will not normally contribute to the required number of parking spaces, particularly those for visitors. Indeed, it is often observed that where there is tandem parking that necessitates additional movement of cars, only one space is ever used, the remaining vehicle being parked on the public highway. The parking requirements for residential development include provision for visitors.

8A.22 Tandem parking for two vehicles will normally be accepted to contribute to the parking requirement for residential development where spaces are for the sole use of one dwelling and unless severe traffic conditions dictate otherwise. Tandem parking for three vehicles will be unacceptable. Larger development schemes should make provision for parallel parking in preference to tandem parking.

8A.23 The limited additional movements generated by tandem parking mean it is not as convenient as parking spaces with independent access. However, this must be balanced with the aim to maintain the traditional street scene. Use of tandem spaces will enable

- parking requirements to be achieved whilst minimising footway crossovers and
- the protection and maintenance of traditional front garden boundaries and the trees, shrubs and planted areas that are an essential element of suburban residential design and character.

8A.24 **Sheltered housing and hostels (care)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Sheltered housing (UCO class C3) | 1 car space per 6 habitable rooms, plus spaces for resident staff as new dwellings standard. |
| Residential hostels and nursing homes for the elderly, where a significant element of care is provided. | 1 car space for every 6 residents (for visitors) plus resident staff, as new dwellings standard above and 1 for every 2 additional staff full time equivalents (FTE). |

8A.25 **Other hostels and hotels**

| | |
|--|---|
| Hostels related to schools, colleges and training (UCO class C1) | 1 car space for every 3 bed spaces, plus staff accommodation, as residential hostels above. |
| Other hostels (UCO class C1) | No specific standard (see A.17) |
| Bed and breakfast and guest houses (UCO class C1) | 1 car space per bedroom plus resident staff accommodation as residential hostels above. |
| Hotels and motels (UCO class C1) | 1 car space per bedroom, plus 1 space for every 7m ² of net area used by the public, plus 1 coach space per 100 bedrooms in hotels with more than 100 rooms, operational parking and servicing as appropriate. |

8A.26 The standard for sheltered housing, will only apply to dwellings that meet all the criteria set out in Policy H15 for sheltered housing. Sympathetic consideration will be given to the particular circumstances of proposals for hostels to be run to serve specified client groups where this may indicate that unusual parking demands will occur. Appropriate planning conditions will be applied.

8A.27 Establishments catering for nightly paying guests are often located in residential areas or on busy roads and developments will only be appropriate where they make minimum impact on the amenity of the area and are not detrimental to the safety or free flow of traffic.

8A.28 It is recognised that a degree of dual use of parking spaces notionally required for bedrooms and public areas will be possible with larger hotel/motel developments incorporating restaurants, bars and other public facilities. Consideration will also be given to the need for coaches and mini-buses to pick up/set down at such facilities. The net area in the standard for hotels and motels excludes corridors, stairs, toilets and private areas.

PARKING STANDARDS FOR SHOPPING DEVELOPMENTS (maximum provision with the exception of heavy goods vehicles)

8A.29 **General retail**

| | |
|---|--|
| Shops (UCO classes A1 and A2, including A1 and A3 take-away food shops with fewer than 8 customer seats). | A maximum of 1 car space for every 40m ² gross floor area (gfa) with provision of at least 1 for every shop, plus access to an off street delivery bay. |
|---|--|

In addition, there should be adequate provision for overnight parking of delivery vehicles and for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles in loading areas.

8A.30 **Supermarkets, superstores and hypermarkets i.e. stores selling primarily food and groceries**

Over 1,200m² 1 car space per 15m² gfa.

In addition, there should be adequate provision for overnight parking of delivery vehicles and for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles in loading areas.

8A.31 **D.I.Y. stores, retail warehouses and garden centres**

over 1,200m² 1 car space per 20m² gfa.

The floor area includes outdoor sales and display areas. In addition, there should be adequate provision for overnight parking of delivery vehicles and for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles in loading areas.

8A.32 The parking standards include provision for essential operational parking and servicing, other shop workers and shoppers.

8A.33 The same standards are applied to both A1 and A2 uses and A3 food take-aways, on the basis that many trips will be dual-purpose trips and that parking provision will be available elsewhere in a town centre location. However, consideration will be given to the impact of trips generated on adjacent uses, particularly residential, and on the effect of casual on-street parking on traffic flows including any likely congestion of bus lay-bys and bus stops or interruptions to the free flow and safety of traffic or pedestrians.

8A.34 Proposals for individual shops that generate a requirement for 30 or more parking spaces should normally provide these adjacent to the store and include provision for disabled persons. The parking requirement for smaller shops may be "pooled" or commuted into public car parks.

8A.35 Large retail schemes are generally designed to suit the current lorry space and servicing requirements of a particular retailer or type of retailing. Specific occupiers' requirements will be considered. However, the planning authority must also consider the implications of the proposed development being occupied by other users or being sub-divided or units being combined.

8A.36 A similar approach may be adopted with Business Class development.

PARKING STANDARDS FOR OTHER EMPLOYMENT USES (maximum car parking provision, minimum HGV standards)

8A.37 Business class development (all UCO Classes B1-B8) 1 car space for every 100-400m² gross floor area plus, with the exception of office development (Class B1), 1 lorry space for every 250m² gross floor area, excluding the first 250m².

For units of less than 250m² gfa car parking may be provided on a communal basis. Other car parking may be provided on a communal basis. Similarly, units of less than 250m² gfa should provide adequate access for deliveries by lorry but this may be provided communally.

The standard for lorry parking in the above business class standards may be varied, depending upon the details of the proposal and if conditions restricting the range of uses are agreed.

8A.38 The standards for all Class B1 and Class B2 developments with units of less than 250m² respond to the flexibility of use that is provided by the General Development Order and Use Classes Order 1987 to ensure policy objectives are achieved whatever use a building is put to.

8A.39 Commercial buildings are often designed to suit the current lorry space and servicing requirements of a particular user or type of user. Specific occupiers requirements will be considered. However, the planning authority must also consider the implications of the proposed development being occupied by other users, being subdivided or units being combined. A similar approach may be adopted with retail uses.

8A.40 **PARKING STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC HOUSES, RESTAURANTS AND TAKE-AWAYS, EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH ESTABLISHMENTS AND STADIA** (maximum car parking provision)

| | |
|---|---|
| Public Houses and clubs (UCO Class A3) | 1 car space for every 7m ² of net area used by the public or club members, including operational parking plus guest bedrooms and resident staff accommodation. |
| Restaurants and cafés (UCO Class A3) | 1 vehicle space per 7m ² for areas used by the public. This is inclusive of operational and staff parking. |
| Primary and secondary schools | 1 car space for every member of staff (fte). |
| Day nurseries and creches | 1 car space for every member of staff (fte) |
| Colleges of higher or further education and other educational establishments (UCO Class D1) | 1 car space for every two members of staff (fte) plus 1 space for every 15 students. |
| Clinics, medical centres, dentists and other surgeries (UCO Class D1) | 4 car spaces for every interview / consulting room. |
| Hospitals (day and long stay) | 1 car space for every 4 members of staff (fte), calculated for the maximum shift, plus 1 space for every 4 beds. |
| Stadia | 1 car space per 15 seats, subject to travel needs assessment. Sufficient coach parking should be provided to the satisfaction of the local authority and treated separately from car parking. Coach parking areas should be designed and managed so that they will not be used for car parking. |

8A.41 A specified on-site provision is not required of schools or nurseries for picking up or dropping off children by car or the occasional picking up or dropping off by coaches and minibuses. However, consideration will be given to these matters in terms of the free flow and safety of traffic, depending on the circumstances of individual proposals.

8A.42 Similarly the servicing needs and possible use of minibuses at larger public houses and other entertainment venues will be considered.

8A.43 Provision for medical uses allows for staff and patient parking. Where the staff / patient ratio is likely to vary from the norm, these standards may be reviewed.

8A.44 All the types of uses in this section could likely appear as individual elements of a mixed-use proposal. Account will be taken of the potential for dual use of parking spaces and servicing requirements.