

TRANSPORT

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TRANSPORT

Introduction

- 6.01 In recent years there have been major changes to the market-led attitudes to transport policy which prevailed during the 1980s. There is now much greater recognition that quality of life is likely to be enhanced by policies which are orientated towards sustainability and which acknowledge the damaging effects of unrestrained traffic growth.
- 6.02 Nevertheless, other chapters have made it clear that economic regeneration is of primary importance to Hastings. Policies and programmes have been adopted aimed at improving commercial stability, employment opportunities and quality of life for residents and attracting tourists and visitors. Inevitably, there is the potential to conflict with the principles of sustainability. At issue is the need to strike a balance between economic regeneration, social progress and effective protection of the environment, including reducing dependence on the private car.
- 6.03 The transport strategy must fit within a policy framework which supports the following objectives:-
- (i) Economic Development
 - Encouragement for new investment.
 - Town-wide regeneration.
 - Support for tourism.
 - (ii) Sustainability
 - Protection and enhancement of heritage and built environment.
 - Reducing dependence on the car and increasing support for pedestrians and non-car users.
 - Enhanced residential quality of life.

- 6.04 The 'Access to Hastings Study' (carried out in 1999–2000) examined how transport improvements to the A21 and A259 corridors with regard to both roads and public transport could contribute to the objective of regenerating both Hastings and Bexhill. The Secretary of State's decision on its recommendations has had major implications for the strategic transport policies for the Hastings area. It is taken into account in the policies which follow.
- 6.05 Subsequently the wider ranging South Coast Multi Modal Study (SoCoMMS) was commissioned and reported in 2002. Its recommendations are referred to in more detail later in this chapter.

Policy Context

- 6.06 At the national level, Planning Policy Guidance Note 13, 'Transport' (PPG13) and 'Regional Planning Guidance for the South East', (RPG9) provide the principal planning guidance documents. Both take account of the shift towards sustainability principles, (which has been further developed in PPG13 published in March 2001). Both documents also emphasise the 'package approach' to the funding of transport projects within defined areas.
- 6.07 At the County level, the adopted Structure Plan contains an integrated transport strategy which identifies a range of priorities aimed at:-
- Controlling and restraining the car and its impact on the local environment.
 - Promoting public transport, walking and cycling.
 - Completion of an improved county trunk road network.
 - Controlling development in ways to reduce the need to travel.

Local Transport Plans

- 6.08 All Highway Authorities are required to produce five-year Local Transport Plans (LTPs) which draw up an integrated transport strategy for all transport in the area. This forms the basis for Government funding of a package of local transport projects – and the County Council has produced the East Sussex Local Transport Plan to this end. The package includes measures to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport – and generally lead to a reduction in the use of private cars. A major feature of the Bexhill and Hastings package in the LTP is the implementation of a programme of bus priority measures in the three identified Quality Bus Corridors referred to later.
- 6.09 The government also emphasizes the need for Local Transport Plans to be co-ordinated and integrated as far as possible with the Local Plan – and this has been undertaken in this document.

Local Context

- 6.10 The principal transport concern for Hastings remains its poor road and rail links with other areas, especially London, Gatwick and the Channel ports and Tunnel. The successful bids to the Government for Assisted Area status in 1993 (replaced by Enterprise Grant Area Status in 1999) and to the European Union for Objective 2 Status granted in 2000, relied greatly on the relative remoteness of Hastings, in terms of road and rail links and journey times from, for example, London, Gatwick and the Channel Tunnel, despite its location within the outwardly prosperous South East. Upgrading of the London (Charing Cross) and the South Coast railway services, and the A21 are considered vital for the economic regeneration of the town.
- 6.11 As set out above there are many other elements to the transport strategy. Some of the schemes for traffic management, traffic calming, promoting public transport, pedestrianisation and environmental improvement have already taken place, and more can be achieved. The principle of improving the main transport corridors particularly for public transport, is well established. The Local Plan sets out proposals for comprehensive improvements in the town.
- 6.12 Within the town, the priorities can be identified as:-
- A need for improved transport connections between Hastings and Bexhill combined with management measures to protect sensitive areas from inappropriate traffic.
 - Good access to the town centre.
 - Environmental and safety improvements for congested areas, especially for the A259 along the seafront.
 - Measures, including demand management measures, to make alternatives to journeying by car (cycling, public transport and walking) a more attractive proposition.
 - Continuing measures to reallocate roadspace in favour of pedestrians.

6.13 In addition to improved road and rail links, the Council also recognises the increasing importance of electronic infrastructure in determining economic growth within the town. It is considered that development of the new technology within the town at the forefront of the development of the 'wired region' for the South East could help offset the existing disadvantage Hastings suffers as a result of its current poor transport links.

Trunk Road and Rail Network Priorities

6.14 In 1998 the Government completed its review of all trunk road schemes. As a result, two multi-modal studies affecting this area were commissioned:-

- (i) The Access to Hastings Study, which looked at all modes of access to Hastings, was completed in late 2000. The Secretary of State's decision on its recommendations was issued in Summer 2001.
- (ii) The larger South Coast Multi Modal Study (SoCoMMS), which reported in 2002.

6.15 The Secretary of State's decision on the Access to Hastings Study which included the abandonment of the Hastings and Bexhill A259 bypass schemes, and his response to the SoCoMMS Study are now available. The resulting priorities for the trunk road and rail network improvements are set out below. On the A21, work on the Lamberhurst Bypass has commenced. Dualling of the single carriageway section between Pembury and Tonbridge is included in the Trunk Road programme. Improvement of the remaining sections of the A21 are being investigated.

6.16 The SoCoMMS Study has recommended a number of road and rail improvements including:-

- (i) The provision of a new link road between Bexhill and Hastings to relieve the A259, and provide access to development sites in the area (see also Paragraph 9.109

regarding the proposed Bexhill Road Air Quality Management Area).

- (ii) A new South Coast express service which would enable five trains per hour to call at Bexhill, St Leonards Warrior Square, Hastings and Ore, and three services per hour calling at two new proposed stations at Glyne Gap and St Leonards Marina.

SoCoMMS also recommended that improvements to the A259 should generally benefit public transport.

6.17 The Secretary of State made his response to SoCoMMS in 2003. In it he recognised that the Bexhill–Hastings Link Road is part of the package of measures to regenerate the area and asked East Sussex County Council to develop the scheme in more detail. He also asked the Highways Agency to address the issue of access between the Link Road and the A21.

6.18 As regards rail, the Secretary of State indicated that the capacity to deliver the additional significant investment recommended by SoCoMMS is limited. But he encouraged the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) to examine the scope for delivering the Study’s objectives as part of its planning objectives. He also indicated that he considered the Willingdon Chord, added by the Regional Assembly to the Study’s recommendations, should be regarded as a longer term proposal.

Road Improvements

6.19 The Council will seek to secure highway improvements and new roads where this would lead to improved safety and better environmental conditions. Such improvements may also be justified to serve new development or improve conditions for non-car users. The design of any new road should make appropriate provision for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians (including people with disabilities) and minimise any adverse environmental and community impacts.

- 6.20 Where transport improvements or measures are directly and reasonably related to a proposed development, the Council will seek to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the prospective developer(s) for their provision. An agreement made under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 may also be appropriate (see also Policies DG2 and DG25 and their supporting text).
- 6.21 Although the Hastings Bypass proposals have been abandoned, the County Highway Authority still wishes to safeguard the route of the proposed Hastings Spur Road Phase 2 scheme.

POLICY TR1

Road Improvements

Land between Wishing Tree Road and Sedlescombe Road South is safeguarded for the construction of the County Council's Hastings Spur Road Phase 2 Scheme.

Road Hierarchy

- 6.22 As part of its integrated transport and environment strategy for this area, the County Council has identified a road hierarchy for the Borough. The Borough Council supports this. It helps to define the role of roads within the town and provides a framework within which traffic management and both highway and environmental improvement schemes can be assessed.

POLICY TR2

Defined Road Hierarchy

Principal and Secondary Distributor Roads are defined on the Proposals Map. In its determination of planning applications for proposals that would gain access to and from these roads, or would have an impact upon them, the Council will have regard to the following matters:

- (a) **The role of the road concerned;**

- (b) The volume and nature of traffic upon it;
- (c) The design of the proposed junction and access;
- (d) Likely traffic generation; and
- (e) The safety and free flow of traffic on the public highway.

Rail Improvements

- 6.23 There are many shortcomings which could be identified in existing rail services in Hastings. In particular, the strategic rail link between Hastings and the International Passenger Station at Ashford contains a considerable length of unelectrified single track line. This severely restricts the important link with the Channel Tunnel and is in need of considerable modernisation and improvement. Services to Gatwick could be improved significantly by reinstating a link north of Eastbourne to provide a more direct route, known as the Willingdon Chord.
- 6.24 An important strength, however, is the fact that the town has four stations. Moreover, the line to Bexhill is the best public transport link between the two towns; Bexhill itself has three stations/halts. The potential for enhancing the use of rail for local journeys should be developed by improved services and better stations. There is also potential for several new stations. In particular, Hastings Station is very well located in relation to the town centre, especially the Priory Meadow Shopping Centre, making rail an important alternative to the car for shoppers coming to Hastings.
- 6.25 The Borough Council is limited in what it can achieve in improving rail services, although the Hastings Regeneration Partnership has helped to fund the refurbishment of Warrior Square Station and is involved in the project to build a new Hastings Station. The Council will work with the County Council, the Strategic Rail Authority and the rail operators in promoting rail improvements.
- 6.26 The Council appreciates that rail links to and from London and other parts of the South East and within the Borough are not as good as they should be, and would be improved as a result of certain schemes. In particular the Council supports :-

- (a) Electrification and doubling of the track between Hastings and the International Passenger Station at Ashford to improve the strategic link along the South Coast to the Channel Tunnel;
- (b) Improvements to the Hastings to Charing Cross services to provide faster links to London;
- (c) Improvement of links with mid-Sussex and the Gatwick area, including the reinstatement of the Willingdon Chord. The Council also supports the inclusion of Hastings within the developing Thameslink 2000 Network;
- (d) Re-opening a coast line station at West Marina and a new halt or station at Glyne Gap to serve the Ravenside Retail Park;
- (e) Progressive improvements to the four Hastings Stations and their surroundings. In particular a new Hastings Station and the upgrading of Ore Station which will be sought as part of the planned regeneration of the Broomgrove area (see Policy B3 in Chapter 11e 'Broomgrove');
- (f) Upgrading other rail infrastructure (e.g. signalling) to allow for a high quality local service between Ore and Cooden. Ideally this will be the Ore to Bexhill metro proposed by the Access to Hastings Study.

As a consultee and in making other representations, the Council will impress upon the bodies concerned the need to upgrade and improve these links.

Wilting Station Proposal

6.27 For some years, the possibility of a new station at Wilting has been safeguarded. Originally this was envisaged as being necessary to serve the Town Development Scheme. As the scale of the Town Development Area has been less than originally conceived, that justification for the station has been reduced. However, the County Council has for a long time considered that it could still have a potential role to play which should be reviewed once the Bypass decision was known. That stage has now been reached and the Council will seek a definitive view from the County Council

on the station proposal. The development of any plans for the station will also include a detailed assessment of how the proposal can best be integrated with other modes of transport.

POLICY TR3

Station at Wilting

The possibility of a new station at Wilting will continue to be safeguarded on the Proposals Map until a full review of its feasibility has been undertaken.

Good Interchange Facilities

- 6.28 Good interchange facilities with rail services are clearly important and, in public transport terms, convenient linkage with bus and taxi services should be promoted. Schemes for improvement or new facilities could be pursued in association with other improvements to the four stations referred to above. In the light of the adopted East Sussex Local Transport Plan, the Council will support interchange improvements for buses, cars, taxis, cyclists and pedestrians at these stations and any other new stations opened within the Borough during the Plan period.
- 6.29 Essential components are seen as good waiting facilities, through ticketing, information services and public toilets, all provided in an attractive and well-maintained secure environment.

Rail Freight

- 6.30 The Borough Council recognises the important role that rail can fulfil in reducing heavy lorries on the roads and will encourage the development of rail freight facilities in appropriate locations within the Borough. As a means of reducing heavy vehicle movements within the town, the Council will also encourage businesses to enter into quality freight partnerships to reduce the number of freight vehicles on the roads.

Public Transport Corridors

- 6.31 Within Hastings, the public transport system relies on a limited number of key corridors which provide the backbone of its network. It is sensible to concentrate bus priority measures and improvements to infrastructure and information in these areas to maximise their benefit. The adopted Local Transport Plan identifies three 'Quality Bus Corridors' (Battle Road/London Road, The Ridge and the A259) which are to receive priority for investment. A number of bus priority measures and bus stop improvements have already been undertaken on these routes and further schemes are planned. In addition a Quality Bus Partnership between the Borough Council, the County Council and Stagecoach was entered into in 2003 with the objective of improving bus services and bus infrastructure in the Borough.
- 6.32 The Borough Council will continue to actively support measures to improve public transport services within the three Quality Bus Corridors. As resources allow, these measures will be extended to cover the whole Borough.

Seafront Link

- 6.33 There is potential for a seafront public transport link between the Old Town, the town centre and St Leonards. Its value would be in:-
- Encouraging the extension of tourist activity westwards beyond the Old Town, where it is concentrated.
 - Encouraging car borne visitors to leave their cars and park in less heavily used car parks away from the Old Town (where there is most pressure) and by using the link to visit a variety of destinations.

The Council will support improved public transport links along the seafront employing whichever mode is most viable and sustainable.

Safe Routes to Schools

- 6.34 The Council will promote the development of a safe routes to schools network, with particular emphasis given to main road crossings.

Cycling

- 6.35 As a mode of transport to support the policies of sustainability, cycling offers considerable potential. Nationally, bicycle ownership has increased substantially in recent years. However, although ownership has increased, the level of usage has not and the major factor has been the decline in child cycling. The Government has promoted a number of initiatives to improve cycling conditions and highway authorities are encouraged to include cycling proposals in their Local Transport Plans.
- 6.36 At the local level, a barrier to increased usage in Hastings is its hilly nature. At present only 1.3% of trips to work in Hastings are by bike compared with an average figure for East Sussex of 2.0%. (Source: Cycling Strategy, ESCC 1994.) Nevertheless, although the ultimate potential for cycling use in Hastings may be below average, there is room for a substantial increase on present levels.
- 6.37 In order to support improvements, three aspects are identified:-

6.38 The South Coast Cycle Route

The Local Plan safeguards a route for the South Coast Cycle Route between West Marina and the Borough boundary towards Bexhill, following the coast. It is recognised that the agreement of the Environment Agency to a detailed route will be required and discussions will take place in the context of the Agency's plans for upgrading the sea defences in this area.. A route is also safeguarded at the eastern end of the Borough between Barley Lane and Fairlight. Several options are still being considered for the section between Rock-a-Nore and Barley Lane.

POLICY TR4

South Coast Cycle Route

Land is safeguarded for a coastal cycle route between West Marina and the western boundary of the Borough towards Bexhill, and between Barley Lane and the eastern boundary of the Borough at Fairlight. These routes and the safety and convenience of cyclists and pedestrians (especially those with disabilities) using them will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for proposals that would affect them.

- 6.39 Cycling Improvements – It is important to differentiate routes for cyclists from cycle routes. Although a complete cycle network throughout the Borough would be ideal, this could not be achieved with present funding. Instead the priority will be to identify places where improvements would be of most benefit to cyclists. As well as highway improvements, signing and other information can also be important.
- 6.40 The Council will support improvements to the highway network designed to improve safety and convenience for cyclists. Audits of all major proposals will be promoted as a means of achieving improvements for cyclists when other works are undertaken.

Where possible the Council will support the introduction of dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes.

- 6.41 Cycle Facilities – To complement improved routing, better and more secure parking arrangements are needed. The Council can promote this in two ways – through its own efforts and as part of new developments. The Council will concentrate its available resources on town and district centres by providing cycle racks and other facilities. Where new developments are proposed, the Council will require developers to provide cycling facilities in accordance with the guidelines for cycle parking set out in the County Council parking standards (see Paragraph 6.46 below).

POLICY TR5

Cycling Facilities in New Developments

Developers will be required to provide adequate cycling facilities in new developments in accordance with the adopted standards.

Powered Two Wheelers

6.42 The Council recognises the role that powered two wheelers can fulfil in reducing congestion within the town and will incorporate measures into new highway and parking schemes that would encourage their use as they arise.

New Development

6.43 At the heart of any sustainable strategy should be the aim of reducing the need to travel – and, particularly, reducing the need to travel by car. Land use planning bears on this. In Hastings, with its tightly drawn boundaries, any development proposed is likely to be within the envelope of the town and not far from most areas of population. However, good access by public transport and other non-car means is equally important. The consultation carried out as part of the transportation study revealed substantial dissatisfaction with public transport access to the Conquest Hospital located on The Ridge. It is the most obvious example of a development which does not accord with these principles although steps are underway to overcome this. The primary objective should therefore be to locate new development in the town close to public transport and other non-car means of travel, but where this is not possible development proposals will need to be accompanied by specific proposals for non-car travel to and from the site.

POLICY TR6

Location of New Development

Planning permission for retail, industrial, commercial and community development will not be granted unless the land is close to a frequent bus or other bus or public transport service and/or is conveniently accessible by cycle or foot. Alternatively, or additionally, the Council may seek to enter into a Section 106 Agreement with the developer for, or to ensure by condition, the preparation of a Green Travel Plan.

- 6.44 The Borough Council is concerned that any major new development that generates a significant increase in travel demand should make appropriate provision for the non-car user and not have an adverse impact upon the transport network.

POLICY TR7

Accessibility

All major new development or development generating significant trips should make appropriate provision in its design and facilities for pedestrians (including mobility impaired), cyclists and public transport – and provide for the mitigation of any adverse impact the development may have on the transport network.

- 6.45 Within town centres the availability of parking spaces affects people's decisions on whether to travel by car or use public transport. Controlling the supply of parking spaces can therefore help to reduce problems of traffic congestion.
- 6.46 The parking standards are those published by East Sussex County Council and adopted by the Borough Council. They have the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Borough Council will take them into account in the determination of planning applications. They define zones where restrictions on parking provision apply. In addition, the Council will encourage the shared use of existing parking facilities where appropriate. Lower onsite parking standards apply in Hastings town centre and other areas where public transport and pedestrian and cycle access is good.

POLICY TR8

Reduced Parking Provision in New Development

In Hastings town centre and other areas where public transport, pedestrian and cycle accessibility is good, the Council will apply correspondingly reduced (onsite) parking standards and will encourage the use of existing parking facilities where appropriate. (See also Policy DG2.)

- 6.47 New development has transport implications. Consequently, associated highway improvements are sometimes required outside the boundaries of the development in addition to any roads forming part of the development itself. In some cases improvements to public transport facilities may be required. Any improvements or new roads necessitated by new development should be funded by the developer. New road development should comply with guidance set out in the East Sussex County Council Manual for Estate Roads.
- 6.48 As a specific example, a high proportion of the traffic from the Ore Valley area will need to use Frederick Road because vehicular access to the A259 will not be permitted at Ore Village, either directly or via Graystone Lane, in the interests of road safety. The improvement of Frederick Road is also required to serve residential sites which adjoin this road.

POLICY TR9

Development Infrastructure

Planning permission will not be granted unless the planning authority is satisfied that any highway or other transport capital works directly required to service the development concerned have been or will be provided.

Development proposals must demonstrate ready and convenient access by a choice of travel modes. Both capital and revenue funding may be needed to deliver this requirement – with the revenue funding being required to ‘pump–prime’ access by non–car modes.

In the case of residential development in the Ore Valley and Frederick Road area, the Borough Council will seek to secure improvements to Frederick Road in accordance with the requirements of the Highway Authority.

- 6.49 There are a number of unadopted roads where improvements are required because of the poor state of repair of the road and/or on traffic grounds. The views of the frontagers will be taken into account.
- 6.50 Planning applications for new development in existing private streets must always be considered on their individual merits. The factors to be taken into account in deciding whether a private street is adequate to serve a proposed development will include vehicular and pedestrian traffic generation; the condition of the road surface; the layout, alignment, width, gradient and drainage of the road; the footway and street lighting provision; and the existence of a street management group or similar formal arrangements to maintain the street to an acceptable standard.

POLICY TR10

Development in Un–metalled Streets

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would generate additional traffic in streets which do not have an adequately metalled carriageway.

- 6.51 Development which includes the construction of a new private street will not be permitted unless the developer enters into an Agreement with the Local Planning Authority under Section 106 of

the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 ensuring that the street remains private.