

**PSM14**

**South Gloucestershire  
Core Strategy  
Examination**

**Position Statement  
for Matter 14:  
Strategic Transport  
& Accessibility**

**May 2012**

## Matter 14 – Strategic Transport & Accessibility

### Q1 Is the strategy based on a sound and rigorous assessment of the transport needs of South Gloucestershire?

Council response – Yes. The [development] strategy is based on a sound & rigorous assessment of the transport needs of South Gloucestershire.

- 1.1 South Gloucestershire's strategic position on the road and rail network has encouraged high levels of growth in housing and employment. This has led to high rates of traffic growth, increasing congestion, unsustainable commuting patterns and longer journey times, particularly in the North Fringe of Bristol. Congestion and longer journey times have created difficulties in delivering a reliable public transport service (Core Strategy para 3.6).
- 1.2 It has long been recognised that addressing these issues requires a strategic partnership approach. The 4 West of England Councils adopted their first Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) in 2006. This was underpinned by the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS) (Examination Library Ref: EB50). Building on the issues and recommendations set out in GBSTS & JLTP 2006-11 (Examination Library RD11), the 4UAs have now published JLTP3 (Examination Library Ref: EB47). These documents, and the IDP – Evidence Base Transportation paper (Examination Library Ref: EB22/1 pg 5-13) set out a rigorous understanding of the transport needs of South Gloucestershire and the strategic measures that South Gloucestershire is committed to delivering.
- 1.3 To build on the previous work South Gloucestershire Council commissioned Atkins to examine the transport impacts of the all the Core Strategy allocations and devise a strategy to support them. In the North Fringe they have made use of the existing G-BATS3 modelling platform that was developed for the West of England authorities. This models future land use allocations across the 4 UAs, with detailed modelling across the Bristol City Council area, North and East Fringes of Bristol, the northern parts of North Somerset and the motorway network. The model includes both public transport and highway elements and therefore allows detailed assessment of potential modal shift in response to improved public transport interventions. The model meets DfT best practice guidelines and was recently used as a key source of evidence in supporting the Best and Final Offer for the North Fringe Hengrove Package.
- 1.4 The model has recently been updated to enhance the modelling of the North Fringe area, which has included a review of the modelling of the transport network in the northern parts of Bristol, including Horfield, Southmead, Westbury-on-Trym and Henbury. The model is described in the Local Model Validation Report (Examination Library Ref: RD43) and Forecasting Report (Examination Library Ref: RD44).
- 1.5 At the heart of the transport strategy is a fundamental change in the quality of the bus network to deliver *a fast, reliable, comfortable, frequent, affordable and lower carbon bus service* (JLTP3 para 2.13, pg 19). The delivery of the Greater Bristol Bus Network (specifically showcase corridors 2, 4, 5 & 7) underpins growth identified in the first 10 years of the Core Strategy primarily focussed on South Gloucestershire Local Plan (SGLP) sites at Cheswick Village, Emersons Green East, Harry Stoke, Charlton Hayes and SPark, (see JLTP3 – Examination Library Ref: EB47 pg 122-123). In addition to the GBBN is the North Fringe Major Development Scheme (see SGLP, Fig 8.2, pg 201-204 – Examination Library Ref: LR1). This scheme is a package of transport and

highway improvements designed to support those SGLP sites. Appendix 3 of the Transport Topic Paper (Examination Library Ref: EB71) sets out the current position with regard this package of transport and highway improvements, suffice to say almost all elements have now been constructed, are under construction or the delivery mechanism and funding has now been identified.

- 1.6 The need to continue to improve transport connections within South Gloucestershire, Bristol and the West of England sub-region is vital to economic prosperity and the quality of life of residents. The scale of development proposed in the Core Strategy will have significant implications for the transport system. To avoid congestion acting as a constraint on economic growth substantial investment in transport infrastructure and the implementation of transport strategies will continue to be needed. This has been recognised as a key influence in preparing the Core Strategy. The transport strategy as set out in the JLTP3 has both informed and will benefit from the growth strategy. SGC Transport Topic Paper (Examination Library Ref: EB71) and Atkins Strategic Transport Case (Examination Library Ref: RD41) set out in more detail how transport considerations have informed the spatial strategy.
- 1.7 The spatial planning strategy set out in the Core Strategy for the period 2016-2026 is closely related to the existing transport infrastructure and proposed transport investment that is supported by the WEP (LEP). Growth is not proposed where there is little choice in travel mode and there is no prospect of delivering a further step change in transportation options within the plan period such as along the Bristol East fringe. Here transportation choice and investment opportunities are limited to highway and bus based travel solutions along the A420 and A4174. Further information is set out in the *Justification for the Strategy for Housing to 2026 Topic Paper – Appendix 1* (Examination Library Ref: EB21) and Atkins Review of Strategic Transport Case (Examination Library Ref: RD41).
- 1.8 Hence, with respect to transport infrastructure, the rationale underpinning investment in strategic transportation choices has been to recognise the nature of the place and uncertain funding context. This has meant the Core Strategy concentrates development where there are most existing travel options and thereby providing the most ‘infrastructure efficient’ investment opportunities. Building on considerable success at delivering transport infrastructure, particularly through improvements made in the North Fringe areas of Bristol through the GBBN, NFDMS and Cycling City project and recognising that Yate and the Bristol North Fringe (at Bristol Parkway, Filton Abbey Wood and Patchway) benefit from main line passenger rail stations with regular connections to central Bristol, the Core Strategy has therefore proposed a number of further strategic housing allocations at Cribbs / Patchway, East of Harry Stoke and North Yate.
- 1.9 This is given spatial expression at Policy CS7 – Strategic Transport Infrastructure which identifies the transport projects considered a priority to reduce congestion and further improve accessibility by means other than the private car. The IDP and its appendices (Examination Library Ref: EB22/1) provide the context to these projects and funding assumptions. Policy CS7 also sets out a series of ‘transport packages’ for the Cribbs Patchway, East of Harry Stoke, Yate/Chipping Sodbury and Rural Areas. The packages provide a range of transport investment options and thereby the flexibility to respond to new unidentified development that may arise and the availability of funding. Given the complexity of the interrelationships between the growth areas and the funding environment, the totality of the packages and funding

priorities between individual elements is subject to ongoing review and negotiations with respective developer and public and private sector partners.

**Q2 Has sufficient regard been had to the impact of future development strategies of neighbouring authorities on levels of congestion and movement?**

Council response – Yes. Levels of growth in neighbouring authorities have been taken into account in formulation of JLTP3.

- 2.1 The development strategies of neighbouring authorities were first considered in the GBSTS which informed the JLTPs. The Spatial Development Scenarios that were modelled are set out at Chapter 2 of the GBSTS (Examination Library Ref: EB50 – 2.2-2.15). The levels of growth at strategic locations in adjoining authorities throughout the WoE set out in the GBSTS remain comparable (if not in excess) of that now currently proposed. Consequently the other 3 UAs are similarly committed to proposals set out in the JLTP3 (Examination Library Ref: EB47 – Major Schemes pg 117-133) such as completion of the GBBN, the North Fringe – Hengrove Package, the Bath Transportation Package, the Ashton Vale to Temple Meads Rapid Transit, the Weston Package Phase 1, the South Bristol Link and the Greater Bristol Metro. These major schemes and a range of other measures such as the Cycle City Project and Smarter Choices measures, set out in the JLTP3, aim to improve the range of travel options and reduce congestion across the 4UA area taking account of proposed growth. Box 2d pg 27 of the JLTP3 also sets out how the 4UAs are working with neighbouring authorities (Wiltshire, Swindon, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire and the Welsh Assembly Government).
- 2.2 As noted in response to Q1 above South Gloucestershire Council commissioned Atkins to undertake the modelling of the transport impacts of the Core Strategy allocations. This work has made use of the existing G-BATS3 modelling platform that was developed for the West of England authorities (GBSTS). As stated above, this models future land use allocations across the 4 UAs, with detailed modelling across the Bristol City Council area, North and East Fringes of Bristol, the northern parts of North Somerset and the motorway network. The model includes both public transport and highway elements and therefore allows detailed assessment of potential modal shift in response to improved public transport interventions. The model meets DfT best practice guidelines and was recently used as a key source of evidence in supporting the Best and Final Offer for the North Fringe Hengrove Package.
- 2.3 The model has recently been updated to enhance the modelling of the North Fringe area, which has included a review of the modelling of the transport network in the northern parts of Bristol, including Horfield, Southmead, Westbury-on-Trym and Henbury. The model is described in the Local Model Validation Report (Examination Library Ref: RD43) and Forecasting Report (Examination Library Ref: RD44).
- 2.4 The model therefore incorporates the development strategies of adjacent authorities and detailed analysis has been undertaken of the volume of travel and resultant congestion on the road network, within both South Gloucestershire and north Bristol. The transport measures set out in Policy CS7 and specific proposals developed for the New Neighbourhoods and Housing Opportunity Area will successfully mitigate the impacts of additional traffic.

### **Q3 Is sufficient priority given to public transport improvements to reduce reliance on the car?**

Council response – Yes. Improvements in public transport are the principal means by which reliance on the car will be reduced.

- 3.1 The transport packages have been designed so that the measures to maximise sustainable travel choices, not only for residents for the New Neighbourhoods, but also those which help to improve travel choices for current users of the network have been accorded the highest priority. Hence, the measures proposed by the strategy accord with the following hierarchy:
- I. 'Smarter choices' measures to encourage new residents and employees to travel by walking, cycling or public transport;
  - II. Improvements to the walking and cycling network, including links to the existing network;
  - III. Improvements to bus services and extension of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in the North Fringe;
  - IV. Improvements to local rail services; and
  - V. Highway infrastructure, to provide access to the New Neighbourhoods and to mitigate the impacts of additional traffic generated by them.
- 3.2 To support this approach a range of specific public transport measures have been adopted as described below.

#### **Bus and rapid transit**

- 3.3 As stated in response to Q1 above the growth identified in the Core Strategy, primarily in the North Bristol Fringe is underpinned by the delivery of the North Fringe to Hengrove Package. Documentation relating to this package and approval of the funding bid can be found at:
- JLTP3 – Examination Library Ref: EB47 pg 127-128,
  - SGC Transport Topic Paper - Examination Library Ref: EB71.
  - Major Scheme Transport Bid – Examination Library Ref: RD12, RD12/1, RD12/2 & RD12/3.

The NFHP forms a principal part of the Cribbs Patchway and East of Harry Stoke New Neighbourhoods Packages. It is estimated that there will be 5.4 million passenger boardings in 2031 (North Fringe to Hengrove Package – Value for Money Case Summary Report, para 5.5, pg 25, Examination Library Ref: RD12/4). Substantive additional bus services are also proposed in Policy CS7 and the respective packages, including extension of a proposed orbital bus service across the Cribbs Patchway New Neighbourhood area to key destinations and existing communities in Bristol, the North Fringe, and Yate and additional services to and within Yate itself (See Yate/Chipping Sodbury Package – Core Strategy pg 69).

- 3.4 Modelling of future travel demand in the North Fringe indicates that the package of measures would result in an increase in the public transport mode split from 5% to 10% of all journeys made. Forecasts indicate that there is potential for almost 600

passengers per day to use new bus services that would be provided to serve the North Yate area.

## **Rail**

- 3.5 Electrification of the Great Western Main Line and associated improvements to Bristol Parkway Station was approved by DfT in 2011 and is due to be completed by 2016. This scheme will improve capacity and frequency of services to London (see Rail Utilisation Strategy – Examination Library Ref: RD31, pg 98). This will materially increase capacity of the northern approach to Bristol Temple Meads. This is considered the catalyst to improving the capacity and frequency of rail services throughout the West of England and beyond and will be a considerable factor in helping to deliver the Greater Bristol Metro project, supported by the 4UAs (JLTP3 - Examination Library Ref: EB47 pg 130).
- 3.6 Moreover development at Cribbs Patchway significantly improves the case for re-introducing passenger services on the Hallen Freight Line. The Cribbs Patchway Package thus makes provision for potential new station(s) on this section of line. Yate also benefits from a main line station. A principal objective of the Metro Project is therefore the introduction of half hourly services between Yate and Bristol Temple Meads via Bristol Parkway.

## **Q4 Is the delivery of transport initiatives in Policy CS7 realistic in view of economic uncertainties?**

Council response – The location of the new neighbourhoods makes best use of existing transport infrastructure and of transport interventions with a realistic prospect of delivery. The ‘package’ approach as set out in Policy CS7 provides flexibility to respond to changes in the funding environment. The North Fringe to Hengrove Package has Programme Entry Status and it is considered that other required interventions are deliverable and fundable.

- 4.1 SGC Transport Topic Paper (Examination Library Ref: EB71, para 3.5 & 3.6) sets out the rationale behind the ‘package’ approach. This approach allows for fluctuations in economic conditions. In essence, some items, such as the Greater Bristol Metro project remain subject to ‘major scheme bid(s)’ to central Government, and as yet do not have committed funding, but require support as expressed in statutory documents such as the Core Strategy in order to demonstrate a commitment to deliver the JLTP and thereby form a key component of a future funding bid.
- 4.2 Notwithstanding this, the Atkins Transport Review Papers (Examination Library Ref: RD39,40 & 42) with respect the North Fringe, Yate and Thornbury state that there are no fundamental impediments to the delivery of the packages (Examination Library Ref: RD39 para 6.1-6.11, RD40 para 6.1-6.24, RD42 para 3.14-3.17). The IDP (Examination Library Ref: EB22/1, Transport Evidence Paper – Appendix 1) provides a guide as to what it is considered a reasonable level of contributions that can be assumed from development partners for transport infrastructure. The final £ amount will however be determined by the development management process. The total and split between various components will undoubtedly change as a consequence of the further more detailed modelling, testing and design process. The SGC Transport Topic Paper (Examination Library Ref: EB71– para 3.7-3.19) sets out the current position with respect the components of Policy CS7.

- 4.3 Given the success of the WoE / JLTP with regard attracting central government funding via, for example, major scheme bids and through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, further funding will be sought and has a reasonable prospect of being made available in later years of the plan to deliver the Metro project and other local transport improvements. The Government has also recently consulted on proposals to devolve Transport funding to the LEPs. Consequently, the LEP will give high priority to infrastructure schemes that assist promote growth. The Council will also make other funding sources available such as New Homes Bonus and Tax Increment Financing.

**Q5 Will policy CS8 provide an adequate basis for improving accessibility in South Gloucestershire?**

Council response – Yes, policy CS8 provides an adequate basis for improving accessibility in South Gloucestershire.

- 5.1 Policy CS8 is in accordance with NPPF paragraphs 29 – 41, in promoting patterns of development that facilitates the use of sustainable travel modes, and sustainable travel options. CS8 should be read alongside CS1. CS1 promotes development that is well connected to the wider network of foot, cycle and public transport links and public realm that serves the needs of pedestrians and cyclists, children, disabled and older people, particularly through highway schemes that utilise homezone and shared space principles. Appendix A sets proposed modifications to bring it into accordance with the NPPF.

**Q6 What evidence is available to justify the 50% limit on garage spaces contributing to parking provision in major residential schemes?**

Council response – The following evidence is available to justify a 50% limit on garage spaces.

- 6.1 Research carried out on behalf of the DCLG (Residential Car Parking Research (May 2007) – Examination Library Ref: NP30, pg 10) states that, '*Local planning authorities will need to consider whether to count private garages as car parking spaces given that they are not used for this purpose by a significant proportion of residents*'. The footnote clarifies that, '*This was re-affirmed by the case study questionnaires carried out as part of the research, where less than one third of respondents said that they parked their cars in their garages*'. South Gloucestershire has also carried out its own research in Feb-March of this year. See examination library documents SG20 & SG21. Question 8 asked if respondents had a garage and Q9 asked how often they parked a car in it. Of 573 responses 44% of those that had a garage stated that they never parked in it and 14% said they only occasionally parked in it. It is therefore considered reasonable to assume that about 50% of garages never or rarely are used for parking a vehicle.

## **Q7 Should the policy make clear how car parking will be addressed?**

### Council response

- 7.1 Parking is a part of the mix of measures to be taken into account in promoting sustainable travel options, but in light of progress made in reviewing of the Council residential parking standards (see programme set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme – Examination Library Ref: EB1/1) modifications to CS8 and paragraph 7.21 are proposed (see Appendix A of this paper).

## **8.0 Conclusion**

- 8.1 South Gloucestershire Council has responded positively and pragmatically in developing a transport strategy based on a rigorous assessment and sound understanding of the transport needs of South Gloucestershire. Growth proposed in the Core Strategy is aligned with the most accessible locations and a programme of proposed transport investment that has been developed jointly with its principal neighbouring authorities through the West of England Partnership (WoE) / Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP).
- 8.2 Policy CS7 sets out a realistic and balanced package of measures focussed on public transport improvements. Essential measures are considered deliverable over the plan period and other elements allow the Council to respond to further funding opportunities that may arise. Policy CS8 provides a sound basis to promote sustainable travel options in accordance with the NPPF. The Council therefore respectfully asks that the matters set out above be taken into consideration.

## Appendix A

### Suggested Modifications to Matter 14

Policy / Para	Proposed Modification	Justification	Main (M) or Additional (A) Modification
CS8 (p71)	3. ...All new development proposals of a sufficient scale will be required to provide pro-active facilities and measures to reduce <u>greenhouse gas emissions &amp; travel demand</u> , ...	To bring into accordance with the NPPF (para 30).	A
CS8 (p72)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to <i>high-speed telecommunications infrastructure (capable of delivering superfast internet connections)</i> broadband and...</li> </ul>	Update / Clarification	A
CS8 (p72)	Insert into criteria 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Provision of facilities for charging plug-in or other ultra low emission vehicles</u></li> </ul>	To bring into accordance with the NPPF (para 35)	A
CS8 (p72)	<p>4. <u>Parking and vehicular access</u> for new development. <del>Where inadequate or poorly designed residential parking can add to congestion, hinder bus and emergency services and have a negative impact on quality of life, the Council may adopt a more flexible approach that takes into account the specific requirements of new housing; and established residential areas. Maximum parking standards will remain for non-residential parking uses.</del></p> <p><del>With regard to major residential schemes, only 50% of the garages proposed will be allowed to contribute to the total number of parking spaces. Car parking and vehicular site access should also be well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene and does not compromise walking, cycling, public transport infrastructure and highway safety.</del></p> <p>All new development proposals will also be required to provide safe &amp; secure cycle parking facilities in accordance with the Council's standards.</p>	Modification in light of progress made with reviewing the Council's residential parking standards.	A
7.21 (p73)	<del>Proposals for development will be required to have regard to the Council's approved maximum vehicle parking standards.</del> Parking remains an important part of demand management and an issue that will be kept under review. <del>However, inadequate or poorly designed residential parking can add to congestion, hinder bus and emergency</del>	Update in light of progress made with reviewing the Council's residential parking standards.	A

Policy / Para	Proposed Modification	Justification	Main (M) or Additional (A) Modification
	<p>services and have a negative impact on quality of life. <del>The Council will therefore require higher off street parking provision to cater for the additional demand for parking created by development proposals, unless developers can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that on-street parking problems will not be caused. Maximum parking standards will remain for destination parking uses.</del> Lower parking standards may be more appropriate as elements of the strategic transport infrastructure are implemented. <del>With respect to garages, residents often utilise them for storage, rather than parking vehicles. Therefore, only 50% of the garages on a residential scheme will be allowed to contribute towards the parking requirement.</del> The Council intends to undertake an early review of Parking Standards and bring forward new residential car parking standards at the earliest opportunity. <del>Consequently, the Council is preparing a</del> <u>has recently commenced an early review of Residential Parking Standards SPD in accordance with the timetable set out in the LDS adopted 2012. and will shortly be consulting on its proposals.</u></p>		