

# Partnership Protocol

## Working with Local Authorities

The GCRP is committed to working in close consultation and engagement with local authorities in Gloucestershire. To achieve this we have developed a working protocol with Gloucestershire County Council's Transport Development Management team and also with local district planning departments.

Whilst GCRP could simply select applications to respond on when they are formally lodged, the 'thought partner' approach means that we want to work constructively with planning and transport bodies as early as possible within the planning process. This means engagement at pre-application and Statement of Community Involvement stages, and ensuring that views are aligned.

Our GCRP charter for working with local authorities and other key stakeholders is built around a number of principles and practices.

## Technical Content & Scope

GCRP's focus will certainly cover the connectivity of the proposed development to the nearest railway station, whether that is a public transport, walking, cycling or car journey. It will examine the scope for rail travel to form part of the travel demand management approach for the site, and also examine any impacts that may be felt at the stations affected (e.g. cycle parking provision, pick up/drop off facilities etc).

Note that in many cases there may be a choice of stations available to the occupier, depending on journey type, distance and end destination, so this will be considered in our response.

## Communications

We have agreed to set up a clear communications protocol so that individual Development Management (DM) officers and lead planning officers know that we are intending to comment on any specific development proposal. Normally this will be for larger applications (see filter criteria) but in some cases there may be a very specific opportunity close to a station (e.g. change of use of retail to residential where this loses a community resource/activity near a station) where we may wish to comment.

Our role will be to explore ways in which sound development proposals can be made 'better' and aim for a high quality approach to low/no carbon and sustainability aspects. Both GCC transport and LPA case officers will be able to maintain a one to one relationship with us, and actively refer applications and proposals to us. We will give professionally constructed, evidence based, independent responses designed to maximise the use of sustainable transport modes and creatively explore opportunities to achieve mode shift and positive travel behaviour change.

## Submission of Comments

Normally our comments will be made direct to the GCC Transport DM team and copied to the planning authority, allowing GCC to incorporate our observations and evidence base into their own responses. GCRP will reserve the right to make a standard objection/supporting statement through the normal 'planning portal' process but the Gloucestershire protocol will ensure that views are harmonised and reflective of LTP4 policies and relevant District Local Plans, including Neighbourhood Plans that are either already 'made' or close to their finalisation.

We will also copy our response to Network Rail, the relevant TOCs (integration, development and community rail officers), and the relevant Town/Parish Councils (as required). We will also work with and notify relevant bus operators and also the Canals and Rivers Trust where towpath and other pedestrian/cycle links are an important part of the enabling infrastructure.

### Involving Parish & Town Councils

There may be occasions where a Parish or Town Council has asked for us to make a statement or provide a view. In these instances it will be the same view as submitted to GCC/Districts and be based on our professional independent judgement. We will make our evidence base available openly to Parish and Town Councils for their use, but should their interpretation and application of the evidence be presented differently, we will ask that that is made clear by the relevant parish planning committee in their submission to the planning authority

### Neighbouring Authorities

We are very open to working with local authorities that share a boundary with Gloucestershire, as rail provision in their counties often benefits planning decision made here. In particular the roles of South Gloucestershire (proposed station at Charfield), Monmouthshire (Chepstow), Worcestershire (Worcestershire Parkway and Honeybourne). Swindon Borough (Swindon), and Oxfordshire (Kingham and Shipton) are relevant and we will continue to build positive relationships with our neighbouring District, County and unitary councils.

### Undertaking Regular Reviews

We will review the Developer guide and supporting toolkit on an annual basis and make any necessary changes to meet current planning and transport policy, legal or regulatory guidelines. We will also engage through the Steering Group and GCC's Transport Development Management Team meeting

### Annual Developer Briefing

Finally, we will hold an annual Development Briefing meeting with councils (County, District and Parish/Town Council), developers and their consultants to explain how the guide works and also to engage positively on sustainable transport opportunities in the County.

