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## 5. Economy and infrastructure

Supporting economic growth by delivering a range and mix of employment uses, sites and types in the most appropriate location for the particular use, supported by and integrated with housing and other community infrastructure.



# Core Policies

- 5.1 These policies sit at the heart of the Plan. They are the principal means of delivering the Plan’s strategic objectives in relation to economic growth, jobs and infrastructure throughout the District (**S02, S03, S04**).

## Economic growth and strategic employment needs

### Core Policy CP11: New employment development ▶

- 5.2 The Council promotes and supports job growth in the District not only through provision of opportunities in the traditional employment land use categories of business use, general industrial use and storage/distribution use and “*Sui Generis*” industrial uses, but also in tourism, retailing, health care, education and leisure facilities. These are significant employment generators and are important to the functioning of the District’s economy.
- 5.3 Consultants completed an **Employment Land Review (ELR)** in March 2021 for the Council. This takes the employment land requirements, set out in the **Gloucestershire Economic Needs Assessment (ENA)** which is detailed in **Chapter 2.6 Local economy and jobs**, and identifies a supply of suitable land to meet the needs of the District to 2040. The employment strategy for Stroud provides for new growth, protects key employment sites whilst allowing regeneration opportunities on poorly performing sites.
- 5.4 It is important to ensure that strategic housing growth is coupled with the delivery of significant employment development of the right type to help improve self-containment of communities. Policies for employment development in the Local Plan will have regard to both strategic and local business needs, and will aim to facilitate a flexible supply of land moving

towards a low carbon economy. They will aim to both increase the number of jobs available locally that are currently lower than the number of available workers and provide for jobs that more readily match the broad skills of the workforce. Too few jobs and provision for a lower skill base are factors that have led to considerable movement of higher skilled workers out of the District to other places of employment. The District already has a reputation for advanced engineering, green technologies and creative skills that should be built upon. Further sites in locations that are accessible to the existing and proposed labour supply are proposed, but with a focus on urban areas in order to help reduce out-commuting from the District.

- 5.5 Stroud is predominantly a rural district however, and it is recognised that employment growth will also take place away from traditional business parks and industrial estates – for example through the diversification of the rural economy, and the growth of leisure and tourism and increase in home working. Appropriate proposals to make provision for jobs in these areas will be supported. Opportunities for industrial symbiosis will be sought. This is the interaction and association between various companies and industries in which by-products and waste materials can form the raw materials and resources for other industry. Encouragement of these principles will contribute to a more sustainable, circular economy.



5.6 The District contains a number of key employment sites that provide a good range of premises for existing and new businesses. The **ELR** has assessed the role of these employment sites and has recommended that these are protected as they form the basis for the Council's employment role. However, some employment sites are relatively run down, under-used and would benefit from regeneration. The area requires more jobs and the more intensive use of much of this land for higher density employment development, coupled where appropriate with enabling development and environmental improvements, complements the overall strategy for growth.

## Core Policy CP11

### New employment development

New employment development will be provided through a range of sites and premises across the District. Strategic employment sites will be allocated, mixed use developments encouraged and the expansion of existing businesses and rural diversification supported. Employment sites will be provided in order to increase the range and choice of sites available and to address the self-containment of settlements in terms of homes / jobs balance. Small work places, live-work units and facilities for co-working will be supported as part of new housing developments.

Existing employment sites will be safeguarded unless new proposals are put forward that intensify the employment use of part of the site, supported by enabling development as set out in other policies in the Local Plan. Sites allocated for mixed use redevelopment should aim to provide for at least the same or an increase in the level of job opportunities as existed when the employment space was previously used, subject to viability and site specific circumstances.

Permission will be granted for industrial or business development, or for the expansion or intensification of existing industrial or business uses, recognising the specific locational requirements of different sectors, provided that the proposals would:

1. Be of a type and scale of activity that does not harm the character, appearance or environment of the site or its surroundings or to the amenity of occupiers of nearby properties
2. Be readily accessible by public transport, wherever possible, and by bicycle and foot, or contribute towards provision of new sustainable transport infrastructure to serve the area, in order to make the development accessible by those modes
3. Have a layout, access, parking, landscaping and facilities that are appropriate to the site and its surroundings
4. Use sustainable construction techniques and provide for renewable or low carbon energy sources in association with the proposed development
5. Enable provision of infrastructure in ways consistent with cutting carbon dioxide emissions and adapting to changes in climate (including SuDS and green infrastructure)
6. Demonstrate how the principles of industrial symbiosis have been taken into account.



## Retail and town centres

### Core Policy CP12: Town centres and retailing ▶

- 5.7 This core policy seeks to protect and bolster the role that our town centres play in providing jobs and contributing to a strong local economy.
- 5.8 A countywide hierarchy of retail centres was first established through the adopted **Gloucestershire Structure Plan** (1991). For this Local Plan, the hierarchy has been examined and a revised hierarchy established to serve the needs of retail and town centre development in Stroud District. The **Stroud Town Centres and Retailing Study 2010**, as amended by the **Retail Study Update 2013** and **Retail/ Town Centre Planning Policy Advice 2021**, identifies and assesses the higher levels of this hierarchy and this is reflected in **Core Policy CP12**. The hierarchy reflects the scale, nature and role of the centres and their importance within the retail and leisure offer in the District.
- 5.9 The Town Centres are shown on the **Policies Map**, including the Primary Shopping Areas. Primary Shopping Areas are defined as where retail development is concentrated. Primary Shopping Areas are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses are provided within the defined Town Centre outside of the Primary Shopping Area. The town centres identified comprise **Berkeley, Dursley, Minchinhampton, Nailsworth, Painswick, Stonehouse, Stroud** and **Wotton-under-Edge**. All typically comprise a diverse range of town centre uses with a retail focus and can include ancillary social, leisure and cultural and other uses.
- 5.10 The role of the identified retail centres will be maintained to ensure they provide an appropriate range of facilities and services which serve each

town, community or rural hinterland. The hierarchy of centres will serve to sequentially guide appropriate retail, leisure and commercial development to help maintain and, wherever possible, enhance those centres. Development in these centres should seek to serve the needs of the residents within their hinterland or catchment, although some centres may also serve passing trade. Town and district centres should be, or have the potential to be, well served by public transport. Local centres should be easily accessible by cycling and walking. Local centres and neighbourhood shopping, identified as lower-order local centres, should be maintained and protected, in order to ensure all residents in the District have access to a basic range of small shops and services of a local nature.

- 5.11 On allocated strategic sites, the development brief will set out the expected content of the planned new centre and the level of detail and analysis required at the planning application stage including:
- an analysis of the proposed main town centre uses in relation to their scale and format
  - the likely catchment of the proposed new centre
  - an analysis of the accessibility to existing stores and centres in the wider area
  - the spending power of the new development that the new centre seeks to serve
  - an assessment of financial impact
  - an assessment of the likely scale of trading overlap with existing centres in the surrounding area.

(contd.) ... ▶



## Core Policy CP12

### Town centres and retailing

Town centre uses will be located according to the Retail Hierarchy as set out below, in order to promote choice, competition and innovation:

<b>Principal Town Centre</b>	Stroud
<b>Other Town Centres</b>	Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse, Wotton-Under-Edge
<b>District Centres</b>	Berkeley, Cam, Minchinhampton, Painswick
<b>Local Centres</b>	Cainscross (Stroud), Great Oldbury ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Hardwicke ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Hunts Grove ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Kings Stanley, Sharpness new settlement ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Whaddon ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Whitminster, Wisloe new settlement ( <i>anticipated</i> )
<b>Neighbourhood Shopping (Lower-order Local Centres)</b>	Kingshill (Dursley), Woodfields (Cam), Brimscombe, Manor Village

- A. **Stroud** town centre will remain the principal town centre in the District. Proposals for major town centre uses will be directed sequentially to the Primary Shopping Area but then to the wider town centre. After Stroud, priority will be given to improving retail and leisure facilities in **Dursley, Stonehouse, Nailsworth** and **Wotton-under-Edge**.
- B. The vitality and viability of all the District's centres will be maintained and enhanced, as will their existing range of uses, including local markets. This will involve widening the range of uses (including housing, where appropriate) and encouraging convenient and accessible shopping, leisure, service and employment facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of residents.

- C. On large new settlement and urban extension sites, which are not within easy walking distance of existing shops and services, new local centres will be established or existing retail and leisure functions adapted to serve the needs of the residents. Such centres should be of a scale appropriate to the site, should not undermine the role or function of other centres within the retail hierarchy and should not become destinations in their own right.
- D. Retail, leisure and other uses (including entertainment, cultural and tourist uses as well as other mixed-uses) that would support the vitality and viability of the centres in the hierarchy below Stroud town centre will be directed sequentially to primary shopping areas, within designated town centre or local centre boundaries, then to edge-of-centre locations and, only if suitable sites are not available, to out-of-centre locations, provided they:
1. are of a scale and nature that is appropriate to the size and function of the centre;
  2. would not lead to unsustainable trip generation from outside their catchments and;
  3. are in accessible locations with good connections to town centres.
- E. Outside these centres, the following types of retail provision will be supported:
1. bulky-goods non-food retail development, so long as any increase in floorspace will not have an unacceptable impact on town centres and the proposal is in accordance with the sequential test as set out in national policy
  2. specialist uses (including car showrooms) and trade centre developments not within key employment sites, where it will not have an unacceptable impact on a town centre
  3. small-scale ancillary retail uses within employment sites (including showrooms)
  4. changes of use to retail and other local services within existing neighbourhood centres and
  5. small shops within residential areas to serve the local area.



◀ 5.12 In implementing **Core Policy CP12**, the vitality and viability of the town centres will be assessed against the following criteria (drawn from other policies in the Plan):

- The location and prominence of the premises within the primary shopping area;
- The floor space and length of frontage of the premises;
- The number, distribution and proximity to other non-class E premises, or with planning permissions for such use, within the primary shopping area in question and throughout the town centre;
- The particular nature and character of the use proposed, including the level of pedestrian activity associated with it;
- The level of vacancies in ground floor properties; and
- Whether the proposed use will give rise to noise, smell or other environmental problems.

5.13 For clarity of implementation of this policy, bulky goods are defined as durable goods that are too large and/or heavy to be taken away by shoppers and usually have to be delivered (e.g. furniture/ fridges/ freezers/ cookers/ building materials).

## Travel and transport

### **Core Policy CP13: Demand management and sustainable travel ▶**

- 5.14 Our District supports a network of market towns, well connected to their rural hinterlands and interspersed with villages and employment centres. Combined with the sparsity of roads and the hilly topography, this presents a greater range of challenges when trying to improve the transport network, and is a factor in the dominance of car travel as the preferred mode of transport. 75% of commuters in the Stroud District travel by car whilst 27% of people travel less than 5km to work, of which two thirds travel by car (**Stroud Sustainable Transport Strategy, 2019**)
- 5.15 Whilst car travel will continue to be a part of the transport strategy, its role has to be set against the relevant **Strategic Objectives** of the plan, namely **SO4: Transport and Travel**, and **SO5: Climate change and environmental limits**, underpinned by the Council's aim to become carbon neutral by 2030. This will require policies which reduce the need to travel by locating complementary uses close to each other and by seeking the improvement of public transport systems, pedestrian and cycling facilities. This has to be complementary with a policy to encourage the reduction of the impact of vehicular traffic in terms of both congestion and carbon emissions.
- 5.16 **Highways England** operates, maintains and improves the strategic road network in England. The **Local Highway Authority (LHA)** manages and maintains roads within Gloucestershire (outside the strategic road network) and provides public transport and promotes safe and sustainable travel. In addition, Highways England and the LHA consider and provide advice on the impact that development may have on the highway. The Council, in cooperation with both Highways England and the LHA, has produced a **Sustainable Transport Strategy** and **Traffic Forecasting Report**



to accompany the Local Plan. These reports have considered the traffic generation and distribution arising from the developments, to determine how to deliver the connectivity and mobility needed to support growth in as sustainable a manner as possible and the ability of the existing highway network to accommodate additional traffic and whether junction mitigation is required. The results of this assessment are important considerations in the policy here.

5.17 There are currently two major gliding clubs within the District; The Cotswold Gliding Club (CGC) based at Aston Down Airfield, and The Bristol and Gloucester Gliding Club (BGGC) based at Nympsfield. In addition, there are several hot air balloon and paragliding sites. The Gliding clubs generate 22,500 aircraft movements per annum. Ensuring the safety of such aircraft movements is therefore a consideration that can impact on the planning process. The regulation and management of air safety in the United Kingdom is the responsibility of the **Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)**. In addition, gliding is further regulated by the **British Gliding Association (BGA)**. These statutes, regulations and advice prescribe the routes and heights that aircraft can use, both on route to, and in the vicinity of aerodromes. The Council will seek to ensure that any risks between aircraft movements and proposed developments are removed, both for the safety of the general public and aircrew alike. Both the CGC and BGGC have agreed safeguarding areas. The Council will expect planning proposals to address any relevant potential air safety and or aerodrome operation issues in the vicinity of these airfields.

## Core Policy CP13

### Demand management and sustainable travel measures

Proposals for major schemes, as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Development Management procedure) (England) Order 2010, will be supported where they:

1. Provide for a variety of forms of transport as alternatives to the car to allow more sustainable choices
2. Improve the existing infrastructure network, including road, rail and bus, facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, including provision for those with reduced mobility, and other users
3. Mitigate any significant adverse effects upon the transport network that arise from the development proposed.

In all development cases, schemes shall:

- i) be located where there are, or will be, at the time of development, choices in the mode of transport available and which minimise the distance people need to travel
- ii) provide appropriate vehicular parking, having regard to car ownership and the Council's adopted standards
- iii) not be detrimental to and, where possible, enhance road safety and
- iv) not cause or contribute to significant highway problems or lead to traffic related environmental problems.

Development proposals will be expected to consider all possible sustainable transport options before the capacity of the road network is increased.

Development proposals shall be consistent with and contribute to the implementation of the agreed transport strategy, set out in the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan and the Stroud Sustainability Transport Strategy. Any transport assessment needs will be consistent with the requirements set out in the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan.





# Delivery Policies

5.18 These policies add detail to the interpretation and application of the Plan’s development strategy and core policies.

## Protection and development of employment sites

### Delivery Policy EI1

#### Key employment sites

The key employment sites listed below will be retained for B and E(g) Class Uses. Redevelopment for alternative uses or changes of use from employment use will not be permitted on these sites, except for the provision of ancillary uses specifically designed to support the primary use (for example, catering or additional parking areas).

Site	Parish	Location
EK1	Berkeley	Rigestate, Station Road
EK3	Brimscombe & Thrupp	Griffin Mills Industrial Estate
EK4	Brimscombe & Thrupp	Hope Mills Industrial Estate
EK5	Brimscombe & Thrupp	Phoenix Industrial Estate
EK6	Cam	Draycott / Middle Mill Industrial Estate
EK7	Cam	Cam Mills, Everlands
EK8	Chalford	Chalford Industrial Estate
EK9	Dursley	Littlecombe Business Park
EK10	Eastington	Meadow Mill Industrial Estate
EK11	Frampton on Severn	Frampton Industrial Estate
EK12	Hardwicke	Quedgeley West
EK13	Hardwicke	Hunts Grove/Quadrant Distribution Centre

EK14	Haresfield	Javelin Park
EK15	Haresfield	Quedgeley Trading Estate East
EK16	Hinton	Severn Distribution Park
EK17	Kingswood	Renishaw New Mills
EK18	Kingswood	Renishaw Charfield Works
EK19	Kingswood	Abbey Mill Industrial Area
EK21	Minchinhampton	Aston Down
EK22	Nailsworth	Inchbrook Industrial Estate
EK23	Nailsworth	Nailsworth Mill Industrial Estate
EK24	Nailsworth	Spring Mill Industrial Estate
EK25	Rodborough	Bath Road Industrial Estate
EK26	Stonehouse	Stroudwater Industrial Estate
EK27	Stonehouse	Stonehouse Park
EK28	Stonehouse	Bonds Mill Industrial Estate
EK29	Stonehouse	Upper Mills Industrial Estate
EK30	Stonehouse	Ryeford Industrial Area
EK31	Stroud	Fromeside Industrial Estate
EK32	Stroud	Salmon Springs Industrial Estate
EK33	Stroud	New Mills/Libby Drive
EK34	Woodchester	South Woodchester Industrial Area
EK35	Woodchester	Frogmarsh Mill Industrial Area
EK36	Wotton under Edge	Tabernacle Road
EK37	Wotton under Edge	Renishaw Old Town

5.19 In order to create the right conditions for economic prosperity, it is very important that an adequate supply of land to meet development needs is provided. National policy advises councils to ensure that there is sufficient land available, which is readily capable of development and well served by infrastructure, on a variety of sites, as far as possible providing a balance between employment and population.

5.20 The latest **Employment Land Review (ELR)** (2021) assessed 46 employment sites across the District, comprising 345.04 ha of land mostly



in active E/B class use. Employment sites were scored according to criteria such as location, quality of buildings, access, growth prospects and site constraints. The findings demonstrate that almost all sites are actively in use, well occupied and should be protected in the Local Plan. Sites range from high quality, modern business premises to more moderate quality sites to some very modest accommodation. However, almost all continue to meet business needs and even lower scoring sites continue to have a role, providing the budget accommodation which many micro businesses require.

5.21 In response to the **ELR**, employment sites within the District will be protected therefore from changes of use requiring planning permission to maintain economic prosperity. The policy approach retains land as key employment sites and seeks to protect existing employment uses and also directs new employment uses to these areas. Employment uses on these sites include offices, factories, warehousing and light industrial.

<b>ER8</b>	Stroud	Stafford Mills Industrial Estate
<b>ER9</b>	Stroud	Lodgemore & Fromehall Mills
<b>ER10</b>	Kingswood	Orchestra Works

5.22 The 2021 **ELR** recognises that on certain sites there is scope for regeneration and investment through mixed-use re-development, with the aim of providing jobs on site in improved premises. In some cases, a more intensive mixed-use development could provide greater benefit to the local community than if the site was retained solely in employment use. Mixed-use re-development offers the opportunity to contribute to the creation of a resilient, high value employment base, capitalising on Stroud District’s existing specialisms in high tech manufacturing niches, environmental technologies and digital technologies, for example. This approach offers the potential to tackle the local skills gap and, in addition, to contribute towards resolving issues of suitable sites/premises. Mixed uses providing employment could include leisure, tourism, shopping associated with the restoration and reopening of the Cotswold Canals.

5.23 Policy **E12** aims therefore to regenerate sites which would otherwise remain under-used or might potentially be lost entirely to alternative uses, such as housing. The policy underpins the aim of providing sustainable development within the District. It will aid the provision of both homes and jobs within the area. It will also aid the regeneration of the canal corridor and/or bring about environmental and conservation benefits. Environmental benefits include the removal of redundant structures in watercourses and the provision of enhanced fish passage, the opening up of culverted watercourses and the removal of obstructions to flood flow routes. These aspects can contribute to the achievement of good ecological status and help avoid deterioration of water quality in line with the requirements of the **Water Framework Directive (WFD)**.

### Delivery Policy E12

#### Regenerating existing employment sites

Regeneration of existing employment land listed below will be permitted for mixed-use development, including employment-generating uses and housing, provided that there are demonstrable environmental and/or conservation benefits. Site rationalisation should provide at least the same employment opportunities for the local community as existed when the employment space was previously used, subject to viability and site specific circumstances.

Site	Parish	Location
<b>ER3</b>	Brimscombe & Thrupp	Ham Mills
<b>ER7</b>	Rodborough	Daniels Industrial Estate



5.24 Mixed-use redevelopment will be expected to provide important community and/or regeneration benefits. The development should aim to provide at least the same employment opportunities as existed when the employment space was previously used, subject to viability and site specific circumstances. In circumstances of site vacancy over a long time period, an employment densities guide shall be used as a basis to model traffic generation related to the last authorised employment use. An appropriate model shall be agreed with the Council.

### Delivery Policy EI2a

#### Former Berkeley Power Station

The site will be retained for office, B2 and B8 employment uses and for employment related training and education purposes and for operations and uses associated with the decommissioning of the nuclear power station. Redevelopment for unrelated alternative uses will not be permitted.

5.25 The former Berkeley Power Station site includes the **Nuclear Licensed Site** subject to the decommissioning process and also de-licensed office and laboratory accommodation.

5.26 Proposals for operations and uses associated with decommissioning, waste management and land remediation on the **Nuclear Licensed Site**, in line with national strategies and policies and regulatory requirements, will be supported.

5.27 The de-licensed site, which includes office and laboratory accommodation, is now subject to ongoing re-use and redevelopment as the **Gloucestershire Science and Technology Park**. The Park will include a

range of educational, training and research facilities related to the renewable energy, engineering, digital technologies, advanced manufacturing and nuclear sectors with room for expansion. Proposals for continued office, B2 and B8 uses and ancillary uses, or those associated with the Science and Technology Park (including forms of renewable and low carbon energy generation) will be supported.

5.28 The District Council, the County Council and neighbouring South Gloucestershire Council, are supporting a bid being put forward by Western Gateway, for Berkeley and nearby Oldbury power stations to host a prototype fusion power plant and associated facilities as part of the **STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production)** UK programme. If selected, the nomination would create thousands of highly skilled jobs, and create a world leading fusion cluster, requiring support from our aerospace, marine, digital, cyber, phototonics and construction sectors, significantly boosting our economy. The Government will select the successful site by December 2022.

### Delivery Policy EI4

#### Development at existing employment sites in the countryside

At existing employment sites in the countryside, the extension of existing buildings, site boundaries and the provision of new buildings, including infilling between existing buildings, will be acceptable provided that:

1. The proposal facilitates the retention or growth of local employment opportunity
2. The proposal would not cause an unacceptable visual impact on the local character in terms of its siting, scale, materials or site coverage





3. There are no suitable alternative buildings or sites that can be used adjacent to the site or locality
4. The proposal can avoid harm to local amenities and adjoining land uses, particularly where residential uses have been permitted on part of the site
5. The proposal would not generate significant traffic movement and volume that would lead to unacceptable environmental impacts or detriment to road safety.

Proposals will be expected to include measures to secure environmental improvements such as landscaping, enhancing biodiversity and incorporating SuDS.

5.29 The Council recognises the importance of sustainable economic development to the rural economy and the role of established enterprises in these rural areas. Therefore, some weight should be given to the benefits of the extension and intensification of existing sites. Policy E14 sets out this approach. Where there is sound justification for employment development in the countryside and a new building or buildings are required, the applicant will need to demonstrate that there are no existing buildings in the locality that could be used for the proposed use. This is because of the general policy of development restraint in the open countryside. This policy excludes farm diversification proposals and associated development which is covered under Policy E15.

### Delivery Policy E15

#### Farm and forestry enterprise diversification

Development which forms part of a farm or forestry diversification scheme will be permitted where the proposal can demonstrate the viability of

farming or forestry through helping to support, rather than replace or prejudice, farming or forestry activities on the rest of the site and promotes the use of farming or forestry practices that have a positive impact on environment.

In all cases, a diversification plan will be submitted, which demonstrates that:

1. The proposed development will stimulate new economic activity with a use compatible with its location, which maintains the relative sustainability of a rural area
2. Diversification activities remain subsidiary to the agricultural or forestry operation, in terms of physical siting, scale and form
3. Diversification activities avoid adverse environmental impact in terms of biodiversity interests; landscape character qualities; air, soil and water qualities; and/or level of activity within a rural location
4. The development re-uses or replaces existing buildings where possible. Where this is not possible, the development should be related physically and functionally to existing buildings and should retain the agricultural character. Any outdoor storage is provided as a minor ancillary element of the diversification proposal
5. The proposed development will not generate traffic of a type or amount inappropriate for the rural roads affected by the proposal, or require improvements or alterations to these roads which could be detrimental to their character.

5.30 National policy promotes the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. Diversification can be described as any proposal which seeks to supplement farm income on working farms. These are usually categorised into E(g), B2& B8 employment uses, tourism, services, sport and recreation and other employment uses appropriate to a rural area. The conversion of disused farm buildings for tourism accommodation can usually be supported;



whilst sport and recreation projects that do not have an adverse impact on the landscape or biodiversity can be encouraged, subject to adequate safeguards.

- 5.31 The choice to diversify does not necessarily mean that farm business stops operating in the traditional way. Any new activity will provide additional income and potentially create more employment opportunities. This in turn will help sustain rural communities and the succession of younger people in rural enterprises. Appropriate investment in the rural economy will also assist in the sustainable management of the countryside, which will bring about wider conservation and community benefits. Production of food for local consumption will be encouraged as well as organic and permaculture farming methods. Diversification schemes can also provide an assured future for traditional farm buildings.
- 5.32 The Council believes that Farm Business Plans should support applications for diversification. Such plans can demonstrate how the diversified activity fits into the wider farming picture, and set out its environmental consequences highlighting how any significant adverse effects will be mitigated. It is unlikely that proposals for farm diversification could be supported for smaller tracts of land which are not part of a working farm.
- 5.33 The proposal should be a secondary activity to the main farm enterprise and ideally will complement the daily farm activity. The scale of any proposal will be important. Too large a project may overwhelm an existing farm enterprise in terms of size or its financial contribution to the business. On the other hand, there may be economic benefits in supporting expansion of an existing business which has become very successful. Again good design can be very important in overcoming potential problems of scale. The agricultural operation should remain the

main business and the diversification proposal shall be subservient to the main farm business.

- 5.34 Preference will be given to the sympathetic conversion of existing buildings and an applicant will have to demonstrate why it will not be practical to use an existing building in preference to new build. Where it has been successfully demonstrated that a new building is required, this should be for the sole use of a diversification project and not for any other purpose. It should also be in scale with its surroundings and appropriately designed for its intended use. Well proportioned buildings, which take into account their setting and use of materials, are more likely to be acceptable. Many farming enterprises have sufficient space next to existing buildings to enable any new building to be properly assimilated into the farm complex without causing undue harm.
- 5.35 The change of use of an existing agricultural building to a non-agricultural use, which subsequently gives rise to demand for a new building to meet the original use, will not be supported, unless there is clear evidence of changing farming practices that can justify further expansion or change.



## Shopping, leisure, tourism and community facilities

### Delivery Policy E16

#### Protecting individual and village shops, public houses and other community uses

Where planning permission is required, development which involves the loss of individual shops, public houses, village halls and other community facilities located outside defined retail and town centre boundaries will be supported where all the criteria below are satisfied:

1. there is no prospect of the current use continuing (which is evidenced)
2. there are adequate similar use facilities either within that settlement or adjoining countryside which cater for the needs of the local population and is accessible by walking or cycling – a distance of 800m
3. the current or previous use is no longer viable, demonstrated by audited financial and marketing evidence over an agreed reasonable period.

5.36 National policy acknowledges that the planning system can play an important role in creating healthy, inclusive communities. This policy seeks to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

5.37 The Council will therefore seek to ensure that established individual and village shops, facilities and services are retained for the benefit and accessibility of the community, for their continued vitality and well-being. Community facilities provide for the health and wellbeing, social,

educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. The provision of these small-scale local use facilities helps to ensure that residents have convenient access to a reasonable range and choice of facilities, including arts and cultural activities, whilst helping to reduce travel and car use. 800 metre distance represents the maximum distance from a local facility that can be considered convenient to walk for everyday activities.

5.38 A reasonable period may be dependent on the specific circumstances of the case. The Council will generally consider a reasonable period to be one where marketing has been sustained for a period of 12 months. The applicant's financial and marketing evidence may be subject to independent examination and this data will be handled with commercial sensitivity.

5.39 The marketing evidence should be on a reasonable commercial basis. A community use viability model may not be on the same commercial profitability margins and this should be taken into account when determining viability of the existing use. A change of use may be considered on part of the site to enable a continued community use.





## Delivery Policy E17

### Primary Shopping Areas

Within Primary Shopping Areas, the change of use from Class E uses at ground floor level to other uses will only be acceptable if compatible with the focus of the Primary Shopping Area as the heart of the town centre assessed against the following criteria:

- The location and prominence of the premises within the primary shopping area;
- The floor space and length of frontage of the premises;
- The number, distribution and proximity to other non-class E premises, or with planning permissions for such use, within the primary shopping area in question and throughout the town centre;
- The particular nature and character of the use proposed, including the level of pedestrian activity associated with it;
- The level of vacancies in ground floor properties; and
- Whether the proposed use will give rise to noise, smell or other environmental problems.

5.40 Primary Shopping Areas are at the heart of the town centre, they contain streets that are dominated by shops and have the greatest pedestrian footfall. It is important to retain the function of Primary Shopping Areas as dominant shopping areas, as large numbers of shops in close proximity to each other are important to the attractiveness of the centre and its convenience to shoppers. These areas can also have a valuable social role as an accessible central place to meet other people and a carbon reduction role with multi-purpose journeys being undertaken.

5.41 The delivery of town centre schemes will be private sector led, but the Council will assist in negotiating appropriate proposals; it will seek to focus retail and leisure activity in the town centres and will resist permanent losses from Primary Shopping Areas (as defined on the Policies Map).

5.42 Within these areas, proposals for ground floor Class E uses will be supported. A proposal for ground floor uses outside Class E will only be allowed if the development does not harm the character of these areas as the heart of the town centre. On upper floors, there will be support for a diverse range of uses (such as residential).

## Delivery Policy E18

### Town centres

Within Town Centres (as defined on the Policies Map) and outside the Primary Shopping Areas, the change of use from Class E at ground floor level to pub or drinking establishment, amusement centres/arcades, laundrettes, community use, leisure and recreational uses, and residential uses, will be acceptable in principle, provided that:

1. the overall town centre character is not undermined;
2. the proposed use contributes positively to the town centre as the focus of commercial or community life of the town; and
3. there is no detrimental effect on the visual or other special character and amenities of the surrounding area.

5.43 Within Town Centres (as defined on the [Policies Map](#)) and outside of the Primary Shopping Area, there are greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses that are complementary to the wider town centre function. Nevertheless, care is needed to avoid a



cumulative impact that could result from a material or permanent loss to the diversity of retail units and other town centre uses normally expected to be found in these locations. Such an impact could be damaging to the vitality, focus and character of that town centre.

## Delivery Policy E19

### Floorspace thresholds for Impact Assessments

In order to ensure that full consideration is given to the scale of development and whether this would have any significant adverse impacts, proposals involving additional retail and leisure floorspace, including cafes, restaurants, drive through restaurants, bars and pubs and variations in the types of goods to be sold from existing floorspace, that is in excess of the following thresholds, should be accompanied by an Impact Assessment:

Retail hierarchy settlement classification	Defined settlements in the District	Retail floorspace threshold (gross)
<b>Principal Town Centre</b>	Stroud	1000 sq m
<b>Other Town Centres</b>	Dursley, Nailsworth, Stonehouse, Wotton-Under-Edge	500 sq m
<b>District Centres</b>	Berkeley, Cam, Minchinhampton, Painswick,	500 sq m
<b>Local Centres</b>	Cainscross (Stroud), Great Oldbury ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Hardwicke ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Hunts Grove ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Kings Stanley, Sharpness new settlement ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Whaddon ( <i>anticipated</i> ), Whitminster, Wisloe new settlement ( <i>anticipated</i> )	500 sq m

<b>Neighbourhood Shopping (Lower-order Local Centres)</b>	Brimscombe, Kingshill, Manor Village, Woodfields	500 sq m
<b>Outside the identified retail hierarchy</b>		500 sq m

The Council will expect Impact Assessments to include assessment of:

1. The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
2. the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

Exceptionally an Impact Assessment may be required for smaller units where it is considered that the development either alone or with other development would harm nearby centres.

Where Impact Assessments present evidence of significant adverse impacts on an existing centre, development will be refused.

- 5.44 Within Stroud District, a network of centres has developed and evolved over time, providing facilities and services to communities. National policy encourages local planning policies to support a competitive town centre, providing consumers with a diverse range of retail offer and individuality. The evidence base suggests that whilst most of the District's town centres are reasonably healthy, some are relatively small and others lack the ability to develop with existing constraints. These town centres could be vulnerable to the impacts of inappropriately scaled proposals. A gross floorspace threshold of 2,500 sq m recommended in the **NPPF**



would not be sufficient to assess the impact of convenience retail proposals on the District's centres. The majority of proposals over the last 10 years have fallen below this threshold. The rural nature of the District and the size of its smaller centres, justifies a need to also look at the impact of any significant in-centre proposals, as these could also detract from the High Street and have an impact on its viability.

- 5.45 The thresholds do not imply that anything above them are of an inappropriate scale and should not be permitted, but simply that anything at or above these would need to demonstrate that there would not be a significant adverse impact.
- 5.46 Applicants for new floorspace proposals within Class E and also including pub or drinking establishments, are strongly encouraged to work with the Council from an early stage to agree the scope of Retail Impact Assessments, prior to the submission of planning applications. Both parties can benefit from such a joined-up approach. The health of town centres (including vitality and viability indicators) and town centre or retail strategies should be considered as part of any assessment.

### Delivery Policy EI10

#### Provision of new tourism opportunities

Tourist built development, including attractions and tourist accommodation, will be encouraged and supported inside settlement development limits at Main Settlements, Local Service Centres and Settlements with Local Facilities.

Proposals must carefully consider the need to protect and enhance landscapes and environmentally sensitive sites, whilst aiming to provide

adequate facilities, enhancing enjoyment and improving the financial viability of attractions.

Development may also be supported in lower tier settlements (Settlements with Basic Facilities) or countryside locations, where:

1. there is evidence that the facilities are in conjunction with a particular countryside attraction or it is demonstrated how the proposal could assist rural regeneration and the well being of communities
2. the proposals involve temporary structures such as tents, caravans or glamping pods, or built development on previously developed land or elsewhere where no suitable alternative existing buildings or sites exist which are available for re-use
3. the scale, design and use of the proposal is compatible with its wider landscape setting and would not detract from any acknowledged biodiversity interest, character or appearance of the landscape or settlement and would not be detrimental to the amenities of residential areas
4. the site provides adequate access and infrastructure and opportunities, wherever possible, to make a location more sustainable – for example by enhancing local facilities or by improving access to local services by foot, by cycling or by public transport.

5.47 Tourism covers a wide range of activities and types of development. As part of the local economy it has significant employment (5% of all employment) and is worth over £180 million a year (**The South West Research Company, 2018**).

5.48 Stroud District has a wealth of natural and heritage assets which attract visitors from home and abroad that range from Berkeley Castle, to renowned attractions such as The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust Centre on the Severn Estuary to our industrial heritage, country houses, commons, museums and gardens. Rural countryside within the Cotswolds AONB,





Stroud's canal network, historic villages and other farm, market and animal attractions also draw visitors to the area. Stroud is also well placed for visiting attractions such as Gloucester Docks, Cheltenham Spa, Bristol, Bath Spa, Swindon and Forest of Dean. Stroud District's built and natural environment is a key part of the tourism product and the future success of the area's tourism industry is, in many ways, dependent on the effective management and conservation of the environment.

5.49 The Council wishes to see the local tourist industry flourish in response to market demand. At the same time, it wishes to protect the special environmental qualities that attract visitors in the first place. Such development should take place within settlement development limits, to maximise any tourism benefits to local people. In applying general sustainability considerations to development, the Council will sequentially guide tourism to more accessible locations, where appropriate (**Core Policy CP3** sets out a **settlement hierarchy**, to which this sequential approach relates). It is reasonable to expect that visitors have access to a basic range of goods and services nearby and that the benefits of tourism are reflected in the local economy. In lower tier and unclassified settlements or countryside, the Council favours the principle of re-use, rather than new-build or the provision of temporary structures such as tents, caravans or glamping pods. Tenting and touring caravan sites provide the cheapest accommodation and in suitable settings can sit into the countryside without unsightly intrusion.

5.50 The Council recognises the importance of our heritage assets and will promote appropriate uses to generate tourism opportunities within the District.

## Delivery Policy EI11

### Providing sport, leisure, recreation and cultural facilities

Planning applications for new sports, cultural, leisure and recreational facilities, or improvements and extensions to existing facilities, will be permitted provided:

1. the proposals are connected to and associated with existing facilities, they are located at a site that relates well to the settlement hierarchy in the District or they are intended to meet specific rural needs that cannot be appropriately met at settlements within the settlement hierarchy
2. the development would not harm the character, appearance and amenities of the area
3. the development can be made readily accessible to adequate bus, cycling and walking links, for the benefit of non-car users
4. cycle/vehicle access and on-site cycle/vehicle parking would be provided to the adopted standards
5. adequate access to and between the facilities would be provided for people with disabilities
6. any biodiversity interest is enhanced by taking opportunities to create a network of multi-functional green spaces, which support the locality's natural and ecological processes
5. it is not subject to any other overriding environmental or other material planning constraints.

5.51 Leisure and recreation are important for our quality of life. Leisure and sports facilities and outdoor green spaces help us to enjoy more active and healthy lives, whilst also making our local areas more attractive places to live.



5.52 More people than ever before are participating in both organised and informal recreation activities and there is an increasing awareness of the importance recreation facilities play in the life of the community. The demand for additional recreation facilities is likely to grow because of greater participation in leisure and increase in the overall population size. Leisure pursuits encompass a range of activities, including indoor and outdoor sports and recreation, entertainment, cultural interests and tourism.

5.53 There is often an overlap between leisure facilities and community facilities. Both provide important facilities and services for local people, as well as a focal point for community activities. Leisure facilities are taken to be those available for formal and informal sport, recreation, entertainment, play and cultural activities.

## Travel and transport

### Delivery Policy EI12

#### Promoting transport choice and accessibility

##### Sustainability through design

All developments should be planned in line with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy. In the first instance, opportunities to reduce the need to travel should be maximised, including through the provision of ancillary facilities on-site and through measures which enable people to work from home, such as high speed broadband. Development should be located in areas which are already well served by public transport and have access to a range of local facilities within walking and cycling distance. Masterplans should be designed to prioritise active travel modes, including emerging mobility options such as e-bikes and e-scooters, over private car usage. Residential streets should be designed to a 20mph speed limit to enhance pedestrian and cycle safety.

Bus permeability and associated facilities should be incorporated into development proposals, where appropriate, and pedestrian facilities should be provided to ensure people can access bus services, either on or off-site. Shared mobility opportunities should be explored and accommodated through design, with the aim of reducing car ownership whilst maintaining personal mobility.

##### Delivering Transport Infrastructure

Where appropriate, new developments will be required to connect into the surrounding infrastructure and contribute towards new or improved walking, cycling and rail facilities within the District and the provision of an integrated public transport network across the District. Walking, cycling and public transport facilities will be required to be put in place as early as possible in development proposals to ensure that opportunities for sustainable travel are available to support early occupiers in establishing sustainable travel patterns. Developers must take account of the proposals included within Stroud Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the Stroud Sustainable



Transport Strategy and the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan. In appropriate circumstances, new development will be required to contribute towards these schemes. Contributions, where reasonable and viable, will be sought towards these strategic transport infrastructure schemes from strategic allocations throughout the plan period. Proposals which are likely to prejudice the future development of strategic transport infrastructure will not be permitted.

### Enhancing Accessibility

All development proposals should have full regard to the transport impact on the strategic and/or local transport networks. Major development proposals, or those that are likely to have a significant impact on the local transport network, will be required to submit a Transport Assessment as well as a Travel Plan, to demonstrate that they have fully considered safe and suitable access by all modes of transport.

The Transport Assessment will be required to establish the transport impact of the development proposals in the absence of mitigation. Where a severe impact is identified, mitigation will be required. Mitigation should be proposed in line with the sustainable transport hierarchy, with measures to reduce car trips through demand management viewed favourably. Measures which increase traffic capacity should not be seen as the default mitigation mechanism and will be accepted only where residual traffic impact remains severe after sustainable transport mitigation measures have been accounted for.

The Travel Plan shall set out targets and measures for addressing travel demand through a package of measures. This will include maximising accessibility by sustainable transport modes, minimising traffic generation and mitigating the effects of additional traffic through a package of multi-modal measures which minimise the distance people have to travel. Travel Plans will be expected to include the offer of Personalised Travel Planning to all residents or users of proposed development. Any planning permission will require full implementation of the Travel Plan.

### Parking Standards

Vehicular and cycle parking standards and principles for new development should be provided in accordance with adopted standards, as set out in **Appendix C** of this Local Plan. This includes a requirement for the developer to justify their own car parking provision with evidence accompanying any planning application. Evidence will need to demonstrate that the level would not have a detrimental impact on the local road network.

- 5.54 The prosperity, vitality, amenity and accessibility of Stroud's communities depends on residents and workers being able to move about and to transport goods and materials. Developing transport networks which are both accessible to all and deliver a high level of accessibility to key health, employment, leisure, education and retail services and facilities will support economic performance, social cohesion and a healthy environment in Stroud District.
- 5.55 The problem of over-dependence on motorised modes of transport has resulted not just in congestion, but in issues that extend from unpleasant street environments right up to global concerns about emissions, fuel availability and fuel affordability. Maintaining, improving and delivering multi-modal accessibility for the residents of Stroud District are important factors to ensure that key services, facilities and destinations which are essential for everyday quality of life can be easily accessed. The existence of realistic travel options other than the private car is critical in encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.56 The policy refers to major development proposals or those that are likely to have a significant impact on the local transport network. As regards the latter, the Council recommends early discussion with the relevant highway authority officers, to identify potential impacts and necessary measures. An application for major development is defined as:



- a residential application for 10 dwellings or more; or
- an outline application for residential development on a site of 0.5 hectares or larger; or
- an application for offices, general industrial, storage and distribution or shops, where the floor space exceeds 1000sqm.

5.57 Transport isn't just about getting from A to B – it is an essential part of business and the quality of life. A travel plan is a long term management strategy for an occupier or site, which seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through positive action, and is articulated in a document. Travel plans should develop a set of clear outcomes that link to an appropriate package of measures, aimed at reducing single occupancy car use and encouraging sustainable travel. Each and every travel plan should be unique, as different sites will have different circumstances. Measures should include both “carrots” and “sticks” to encourage changes in travel behaviour; this may require incentives such as travel discounts, and movement restraints, such as restricting car parking or charging for its use. Travel plans should be relevant to residents, workstaff and visitors and should encourage them to travel more sustainably more often. Travel plans are “living documents” and to ensure they stay relevant and remain effective they should be updated regularly, which will usually be subject to a legal agreement to secure implementation.

5.58 The Council's adopted vehicle and cycle parking standards are set out in **Appendix C** to the Local Plan. The number of vehicular parking spaces in a new development will be a matter of negotiation and assessed according to individual circumstances. The proposed provision will need to be demonstrated to be suitable based on the following:

- the accessibility of the development;

- the type, mix and use of the development;
- the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
- local car ownership levels; and
- the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV).

5.59 The Council will seek to maximise opportunities to secure ULEV parking and charging points to meet the Council's carbon neutral objectives.

### Delivery Policy DE11

#### District-wide mode-specific strategies

Stroud District Council will work with key partners including Gloucestershire County Council and Highways England to develop District-wide strategies to enhance sustainable travel opportunities for all. This will integrate with patterns of growth coming forward in the District, as well as establishing conditions for existing movement patterns to be accommodated in as sustainable a way possible.

5.60 This policy is designed to underpin the objectives of the **Sustainable Transport Strategy 2019** to achieve modal shift away from the private car and to give priority to sustainable transport improvements above additional road infrastructure. The Council, working with key partners, will seek to develop the following strategies:

5.61 **District-Wide Walking and Cycling Strategy:** To identify and accommodate both local and strategic movement patterns and opportunities, and prioritise investment in improvement schemes to create a connected





network. This Strategy should take account of technology such as e-bikes, providing opportunities for longer distance cycling to become available for a wider range of people, and plan for investment accordingly. The Walking and Cycling Strategy should inform Highways Maintenance programmes, as carriageway in a poor state of repair can disproportionately impact on cyclists.

- 5.62 **Shared Mobility Strategy:** Establish a Shared Mobility Strategy with a goal of enabling a transition to a shared mobility transport system. The strategy should support a shift to reduce individual vehicle ownership and stimulate shared access of a cleaner, lower carbon, vehicle fleet and other sustainable transport options.
- 5.63 **Interchange Strategy:** Opportunities may exist for a range of Interchange Hubs to be established on the edge of settlements and/or at strategic road connections, such as M5 Junctions and where the A38 meets distributor roads such as the A4135. Interchange Hubs would need to offer seamless multi-modal connectivity, facilitated by technology. Opportunities to develop such Interchange Hubs into Strategic Sites should be considered, although the relative merits of each option would need to be considered on a site-specific basis and in consultation with Highways England and Gloucestershire County Council. Interchange and Shared Mobility Strategies should be integrated.
- 5.64 **District-Wide Parking Strategy:** This should consider both the charging and availability of public parking across the District. The primary objective should be to use parking as a policy lever to discourage car trips where viable sustainable alternatives exist. However, the strategy will need to recognise the rural context of parts of the District and the disparity in availability of sustainable alternatives across the District. The Strategy should consider all available tools, including parking charges, supply of off-

street parking, and control of on-street parking. The Parking Strategy should extend to consider the impact of pavement parking on vulnerable pedestrians. This should include potential solutions to address this problem, including the use of Traffic Regulation Orders to enable enforcement by Local Authority.

- 5.65 **Public Transport Corridor Strategy:** This Strategy will identify and prioritise express bus corridors to deliver direct and attractive, limited stop services to key destinations, including rail stations. It should propose a programme of measures to include high frequency bus services, bus stop locations to tie into population centres and form focal points for rural areas, and bus priority measures where necessary. Pump-prime funding for these measures will be sought from developer contributions. These corridors will provide an express movement function designed to be attractive in comparison with private car use for the same journey. The corridors would integrate with interchange hubs, and link with more local bus services and community transport.

### Delivery Policy EI13

#### Protecting and extending our walking and cycling routes

The Council will support and encourage proposals that develop and extend our walking and cycling network. Major development should provide new walking and cycling routes within the development and connect to nearby established and proposed walking and cycling routes.

Development adjacent to walking and cycling routes will be required to provide convenient access points for both walkers and cyclists. Development should provide cycle parking where appropriate and in accordance with the adopted standards as set out in **Appendix C** of this Local Plan.



Development will not be permitted where it significantly harms an existing walking or cycling route or prejudices the future implementation of the following proposed routes:

1. The Eastington-Stroud-Chalford route (both the canal towpath route and the proposed Chalford to Stroud utility route)
2. The Eastington-Stonehouse-Nailsworth route
3. The Cam-Dursley-Uley route
4. The Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield route
5. Links between established and proposed walking and cycling routes within Stroud District and the National Cycle Network Route 41 (Bristol to Stratford) and Route 45 (Salisbury to Chester) which cross the District
6. Any part of the walking and cycling network highlighted through the Local Transport Plan or a district-wide walking and cycling strategy.
7. Any route identified as part of the regeneration of the Stroudwater canal and towpath
8. Any route identified through future cycling initiatives to create an integrated cycling network in the district

5.66 Walking and cycling are convenient, cheap and environmentally friendly means of transport and exercise. As well as environmental benefits, a modal transport shift towards walking and cycling for local journeys would provide health and well-being benefits.

5.67 Walkers and cyclists are the most vulnerable groups of road users. Walking and cycling routes will be planned with the following principles in mind:

- vehicle speeds should be kept down where there are significant numbers of cyclists;

- conflict between cycles and motor vehicles should be minimised;
- safe and convenient crossing points should be provided at busy roads and junctions;
- parking for cycles should be secure and convenient; and
- potential conflict between cyclists and pedestrians should be avoided where possible.

5.68 The District Council is working with local communities, Gloucestershire County Council and other stakeholders to deliver an ambitious strategic network of walking and cycling routes across the District, focussed along key movement corridors, joining up our main settlements and key employment areas, to provide safe and sustainable travel routes as well as supporting wider health and wellbeing, leisure and tourism objectives. These routes will be protected and new development will be required to support their development and extension where appropriate.

5.69 Sustrans continues to implement the **National Cycle Network**, with Route 41 (Bristol to Stratford) crossing the Severn Vale through Berkeley and Frampton and Route 45 (Salisbury to Chester) linking Nailsworth and parts of the A419 with Stroud. Parts of these routes will be useful for local journeys as well as for recreation. The District Council, in conjunction with the County Council, will investigate connecting links with these routes (some are already part funded and partially in place) through the Stroud Valleys and from Cam and Dursley. The restoration of the **Cotswold Canals** provides an opportunity to enhance this network.

5.70 The District Council will continue to work with parish councils and local cycling and walking groups to identify and implement cycling and walking routes to ensure as many residents as possible have convenient access to the cycling and walking network.



## Delivery Policy EI14

### Provision and protection of rail stations and halts

Land at Bristol Road, Stonehouse is identified on the Policies Map for the delivery of a new passenger rail station on the Bristol-Birmingham line. The re-opening of the Sharpness branchline to passenger services and the provision of new stations/halts is also supported.

Proposals for the opening or re-opening of passenger stations and halts, and the provision of rail freight facilities will be permitted where acceptable potential sites are identified by feasibility studies.

Development that would result in the loss of land or facilities necessary for the efficient operation of existing stations, or for the provision of stations/halts at Stonehouse (Bristol line) and Hunts Grove, will not be supported.

- 5.71 The District Council will support proposals for making more effective use of the rail network to encourage and support the delivery of sustainable modes of transport. This includes support for additional and more frequent services, the provision of new stations, the re-opening of passenger stations and halts and the provision of rail freight facilities. As potential sites are identified that can be developed over the Plan period, the Council will safeguard them from inappropriate development.
- 5.72 The Council will continue to identify a site at **Stonehouse** (Bristol Road) and will actively support the re-opening of a station here. As part of the wider regeneration strategy for **Berkeley/Sharpness**, the Council will actively support the restoration of passenger services to the Sharpness branchline and the necessary infrastructure including stations and passenger facilities. South of Gloucester, the **Hunts Grove** development has safeguarded 2.5ha for future use as a main line rail facility. The County Council is examining options for a new station south of Gloucester. The

Council will continue to safeguard this land and to explore opportunities to deliver this facility.

- 5.73 The re-opening of previous stations may not be feasible for a variety of reasons. The District Council will support alternative sites should they come forward in association with development proposals and other stakeholders' plans, including Network Rail and the County Council.

## Delivery Policy EI15

### Protection of freight facilities at Sharpness Docks

Proposals for development within Sharpness Docks (south of the lower swing bridge) which would support the viability of the docks for handling freight and shipping repairs will be supported, where the proposal would not have a demonstrable detrimental impact on the environment or amenity.

- 5.74 Stroud District includes significant port facilities at Sharpness Docks. **The Canal and River Trust vision for the Sharpness Docks Estate** identifies land to the south of Sharpness Docks having the potential to be developed as an integrated distribution hub, with a rail freight terminal and good links to the M5 motorway.
- 5.75 To support the new vision for Sharpness Docks, the Council will continue to support the regeneration and rejuvenation of Sharpness Docks south of the lower swing bridge for dock related freight uses.
- 5.76 Any major development proposal should explore the use of the railhead facility for freight. The freight-only line to Sharpness Docks remains open, and there are plans to reopen the line to passenger services associated with the development of the new settlement at Sharpness. In the future,



the line could also potentially take freight off the roads and alleviate some of the issues associated with the highway network, its capacity and use. The majority of local commercial shipping is catered for at Sharpness itself and therefore does not progress along the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal. Nevertheless, any potential future use in association with the rail link could offer the potential for tri-modal transport facilities.

implement 'smart' travel behaviour change measures. These can comprise a combination of physical interventions, such as cycle parking facilities or cycle lanes, combined with improved public transport services backed up by information and marketing campaigns.

### Delivery Policy EI16

#### Provision of public transport facilities

Development proposals should cater for the needs of bus and taxi operators, where appropriate. Layouts should encourage operational efficiency, maximise likely bus passenger traffic and include ancillary facilities such as shelters and seating for users.

- 5.77 Expanding the availability of, safety of, and access to a variety of transportation options will contribute to a sustainable transport network, as well as stimulate economic development, ensuring access for all. This policy seeks to support a modal shift away from the car. Specific interventions to support public transport are identified within the policies relating to the large strategic allocations in the Plan, but the principles equally apply to smaller development sites and consequently the Council will support layouts and facilities which encourage sustainable modes of transport.
- 5.78 Provision of public transport will not, of itself, guarantee that travel patterns are sustainable. Other aspects outside land-use planning can all play a part in the modes of transport people choose. The District Council can influence travel patterns by a requirement for developers to

