

7 - Highways, Travel and Transport

Improve mobility, accessibility and reduce the overall use and impact of the motor vehicle

Introduction

7.1 The Neighbourhood Plan policies are intended to recognise and facilitate those much-needed improvements to the local transport network that are required to reduce the intrusion of the motor vehicle; to increase the travel choices available locally; and the appeal of alternative forms of transport.

Aims and Objectives

7.2 The following aims and objectives relating to highways, travel and transport have emerged following a programme of community consultation. They have been used to help formulate our neighbourhood plan policies and inform a programme of other community actions. This topic features early in the Neighbourhood Plan because of the weight of concern about travel-related matters expressed at the various consultation events.



Improving our Motorway Connection

7.3 The M5 motorway junction 28 that serves Cullompton and its hinterland is inadequate both in terms of capacity and safety. 72% of respondents to the Community Survey 2014 told us we needed a better motorway junction. It certainly needs improvement before substantial growth can take place in the area. Devon County Council has recently¹ carried out works at junction 28 to ease problems and to accommodate the already committed development in the area. It will likely prove to be inadequate on its own, when all the proposed

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Planning Aims	Planning Objectives
Upgrade Motorway junction 28 so as to be fit for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve junction 28 and ensure motorway connections remain adequate
Reduce vehicular traffic in Cullompton town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relief roads and traffic management plan • Control traffic flow through the town centre
Improve our public transport connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create transport hub • Support new railway station
Extend and improve safe cycle routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop circular/linear cycle network with many linkages in and out of town
Improve the pedestrian experience in and around the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure footpaths are of adequate width for mobility scooters and double buggies etc



1 Autumn 2015

development in the Local Plan takes place. An additional junction may well be required to ease the pressure on junction 28.

7.4 Devon County Council commissioned, in 2015, some initial modelling and design work and exploration of the options for motorway connections that would be required should development of the scale indicated in the Local Plan come forward. Mid Devon District Council has been working closely with statutory consultees to ensure emerging proposals for “junction 28 M5 improvements” are appropriately designed. However, as we were told in late 2017, Highways England has no further scheduled improvements earmarked for junction 28. It does, we are informed, continually monitor the performance of the junction.

7.5 Local Plan Policy S11 supports investment in improvements to the M5 motorway, including junction 28, to maintain highway capacity and safety. Policy CU7 of the Local Plan recognises that an essential prerequisite to major development east of Cullompton is “transport provision to ensure appropriate accessibility for all modes, including a new or improved access and egress onto the M5 motorway and pedestrian and cycling links across the motorway to the existing town”.

7.6 Policy HT01 is supportive of any improvements to junction 28 of the M5 that ensure it functions properly and efficiently and is no longer a cause of complaint and much frustration to local people and businesses, nor a lasting negative memory for many who visit the town. Any up-grading should not just aid the motorist. There are many pedestrians that also cross the motorway regularly via junction 28. They need to do so safely.

7.7 The NPPF (para. 181) encourages us to take opportunities to improve air quality through traffic and travel management. Policy HT01 is consistent with the Cullompton Air Quality Management Area Action Plan 2009 which also prioritised the creation of additional capacity at Junction 28 of M5.

7.8 Cullompton Town Council feels very strongly that, in addition to a new railway station and bus interchange (bus station), there should be a Cullompton Park and Ride to provide an integrated local transport service. This should provide an integrated local transport network to get people from home to local services and amenities as well as to the bus or train station

and so leave their vehicles at home when they go out. This transport service should also look to provide a route along the M5 as well as getting people to the bus/train station and other local facilities and services.

Policy HT01 Motorway Connection

Proposals to ensure that junction 28 of the M5 functions efficiently and safely as population and business activity in the Cullompton area grows, are supported.



Improving our Public Transport Network

7.9 There is a proportion of the local community, many of whom are elderly, that will continue to be dependent on public transport. To encourage others to use public transport out of choice rather than need, we have to make public transport a more accessible and attractive option. A ‘transport interchange’ that links to parking areas, a new railway station and is easily accessible to and from the town centre by foot and connected to the cycle network, will go a significant way towards protecting the services we have and increasing demand for public transport. We would expect the interchange to be on a site near the railway station and determined as part of a master-planning exercise for the location.

7.9 The NPPF (para. 104) says that “planning policies should identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development”. Local Plan Policy S7 supports traffic management measures in Cullompton including improving sustainable travel opportunities and interchange facilities to improve town centre environment and accessibility. Local Plan Policy CU20 commits the local planning authority to seeking external funding and partners to deliver both a railway and bus interchange. During 2018 Mid Devon District Council began the process of developing a masterplan for Cullompton town centre that will result in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The masterplan is intended to be wide-ranging and “seek to strengthen the economy by creating new opportunities for businesses, jobs, shops, leisure, heritage and culture, and transform public spaces to make the town a more attractive place to shop, relax and stay, strengthening the town’s role as growing market town²”. Transport options and the potential of a new transport interchange, and movement linkages with the proposed garden village, are an important part of the masterplan brief.

7.10 Policy HT02 expresses the Town Council’s support to the development of an interchange at a suitable location and seeks to facilitate a transport interchange for Cullompton, which should be connected to appropriate walking and cycling facilities and routes.

Policy HT02 Improving our Public Transport Network

Development proposals to further the provision of a transport interchange for Cullompton are supported.

Improving our Cycle Network

7.11 Cycling is on the increase and showing every sign that it will continue to grow in popularity. There are however, too few car-

² <https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/documents/s11478/Cabinet%205th%20April%20Cullompton%20town%20centre%20masterplan%203.pdf>

free cycle routes. 78% of respondents to the Community Survey 2014 told us we need more cycle routes. The NPPF (para. 104) says “planning policies should provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)”.

7.12 We want to make cycling more appealing as a regular travel and recreation option. This requires easy and safe routes being provided that create links between our neighbourhoods, existing and new, to the town centre, to employment areas and to other public facilities such as the health centre and schools. An improved network of paths for walking and cycling in Cullompton would increase the number of people walking and cycling for shorter journeys in the town. This will improve the health of the residents of Cullompton and reduce traffic levels in the town. The Town Council has adopted a Cycle Paths Plan³ and expects developers to acknowledge this Plan and invest in its implementation. Cullompton Town Council would like to see an extended, coherent and extensive cycle path network, for health benefits and to reduce local traffic. This would include a new cycle route made from Cullompton that connects with the National Cycle Route 3 at Willand.

7.13 Local Plan Policies CU2, CU8 and CU13 provide for cycle and pedestrian links to and from the town centre and within the major mixed-use urban extension areas of North West Cullompton and East Cullompton, as well as at Knowle Lane. Policy HT03 complements and extends the Local Plan’s approach by supporting the development of a safe cycle network across and around the whole town and not just in and out of the new development areas.

7.14 Policy HT03 is consistent with the Cullompton Air Quality Management Area Action Plan 2009 which called for the provision of walking and cycling routes alongside all new road links.

³ Cullompton Multi-Use Path Cycle Path Policy Document 2013/14, Cullompton Town Council, 2013

Policy HT03

Improving our Cycle Network

Cullompton Town Council has adopted a Cycle Paths Plan. Where feasible and appropriate, developments should acknowledge the Cycle Paths Plan and make provision to assist in its implementation.

Proposals that further the development of an accessible network of cycle routes in and around Cullompton are supported. In particular, proposals should look to achieve a greater degree of safe linkage between residential areas, employment areas and public facilities.

Improving our Footpaths

7.15 A lot of the local footpaths are narrow and make it difficult in many places for people to pass safely. We would like all new footpaths to be of a minimum width of 2,000mm, a recognised standard⁴ for good accessibility.

7.16 With an ageing population and mobility aids becoming more commonplace, opportunities should be taken to ensure that there is sufficient width on a footpath to allow safe passing of a mobility scooter with other pedestrians, for two mobility scooters to pass each other with ease and meet the accepted width of pavements for persons with guide dogs⁵. The average size of a mobility scooter is growing. We urge new developments to make full allowance for this or, where it is not practicable, to allow for 'passing places' for mobility scooters at appropriate intervals along new footpaths. Such measures will also enable safe turning for people who use mobility scooters. New footpaths in major housing development areas should at least meet the minimum standard and

4 "In lightly used streets (such as those with a purely residential function), the minimum unobstructed width for pedestrians should generally be 2 metres" Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, 2007 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf

5 Inclusive Mobility, Dept. of Transport, 2002 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/3695/inclusive-mobility.pdf

be laid out as an attractive and safe network that links the new neighbourhoods with the town centre, employment areas and public facilities.

7.17 The NPPF (para. 110) requires us to "give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility "create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards". Local Plan Policy S1 also calls for safe and accessible environments. Local Plan Policy DM1 states that the design of new development must be of high quality and based upon creating safe and accessible places that also encourage sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling.

7.18 Policy HT04 ensures that, whenever possible, new footpaths are of adequate width to accommodate mobility vehicles and with gradients and terrain that will not impair, to ensure wheelchair accessibility. The 2,000mm width is the accepted standard for footpaths "that allows two wheelchairs to pass with comfort"⁶. This standard, we are informed has the support of Devon County Council "for any new footpaths created, where reasonable and practicable, working in liaison with landowners and developers".

Policy HT04

Improving our Footpaths

Footpaths that are provided by new development should be a minimum of 2000mm in width where reasonable and whenever practicable.

Footpaths should link to existing networks to facilitate easy and safe pedestrian access to the town centre and public facilities and services.

6 Inclusive Mobility, Dept. of Transport, 2002