

# **Local Development Framework**

Bolton's Core Strategy

Background Document – BD4C

Prosperous Bolton (Accessibility)

December 2009

**Shaping the future of Bolton**



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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Background Document is one of sixteen produced by Bolton Council to provide evidence to support the publication version of the Bolton Core Strategy, which is published autumn 2009.
- 1.2 This Background Document covers the **Prosperous** theme policies and also policies from the spatial areas, which relate to that theme, from the Core Strategy:
- Prosperous Theme Policies:
- **Policy P5 – Accessibility**
- 1.3 Spatial Area policies that relate to theme policy P5:
- Policy TC1 – Bolton Town Centre (Civic and Retail Core)
  - Policy TC2 – Bolton Town Centre (St Helena)
  - Policy TC3 – Bolton Town Centre (St Peters)
  - Policy TC4 – Bolton Town Centre (Trinity Triangle)
  - Policy TC5 – Bolton Town Centre (Innovation Zone - Westbrook)
  - Policy TC6 – Bolton Town Centre (Innovation Zone – Cultural Quarter)
  - Policy TC7 – Bolton Town Centre (Deane Road Area)
  - Policy TC8 – Bolton Town Centre (Church Wharf)
  - Policy TC9 – Bolton Town Centre (Little Bolton)
  - Policy TC10 – Bolton Town Centre (Merchant's Quarter)
  - Policy TC11 – Bolton Town Centre (Urban Village)
  - Policy RA1 – Renewal Areas (Inner Bolton)
  - Policy RA2 – Renewal Areas (Farnworth)
  - Policy RA3 – Renewal Areas (Broughton)
  - Policy M2 – The M61 Corridor (Horwich Locoworks)
  - Policy OA1 – The Outer Areas (Horwich and Blackrod)
  - Policy OA2 – The Outer Areas (Middlebrook)
  - Policy OA3 – The Outer Areas (Westhoughton)
  - Policy OA4 – The Outer Areas (West Bolton)
  - Policy OA5 – The Outer Areas (North Bolton)
  - Policy OA6 – The Outer Areas (Little Lever and Kearsley)
  - Policy LO1 – Links to Surrounding Areas
- 1.4 Each Background Document is structured to provide information, which demonstrates the soundness of the Core Strategy as a whole:
- Conformity with national and regional guidance,
  - Specific evidence on which the policy approach is based.

- How the policy approach was developed at each stage of the plan making process and a summary of representations at each of those stages
- A statement that shows how the policies contribute to the effectiveness of the Core Strategy as a whole considering deliverability, flexibility and ability to be monitored
- Conclusions on soundness

1.5 All documents referenced are held within the Public Examination Core Document Library.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Policies within the **Prosperous** theme aim to broadly address the issues of narrowing the gap between the boroughs most and least well off and ensuring economic prosperity. The accessibility policy P5 will support the sustainable development of businesses in the town and aid people in accessing employment. Policy P5 has a positive impact upon the built environment and as such is reflected in the spatial area policies set out below.
- 2.2 TC1, TC2, TC3, TC4, TC5, TC6, TC7, TC8, TC9, TC10 and TC11 encourage the location of key services and facilities in Bolton Town Centre and increasing the accessibility of these services by a choice of travel modes, especially for residents of renewal areas, with specific vehicular and pedestrian access improvements, and support for a high quality multi modal interchange.
- 2.3 There will be also be improvements to the provision of car parking across Bolton Town Centre, with a number of multi-storey car parks releasing other areas for higher value uses.
- 2.4 Policies RA1, RA2 and RA3 ensure good access for residents of renewal areas to key services and facilities, helping to narrow the gap between the most and least well off.
- 2.5 Policy M2 ensures that strategic employment sites along the M61 Corridor are accessible by a range of transport modes.
- 2.6 OA1, OA2, OA3, OA4, OA5 and OA6 ensure that residents of the outer areas of Bolton are able to access key services and facilities by a choice of modes of transport.
- 2.7 LO1 supports schemes that enable Bolton residents to exploit employment and leisure opportunities outside the Borough and in neighbouring areas. It also supports schemes that enable businesses to access outside markets, labour, and freight transportation.

### Links to the Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.8 The Prosperous policies take forward in spatial terms the two main aims of Bolton's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)<sup>1</sup>. These are to: *narrow the gap* between the most and least well off and to ensure *economic prosperity*. Accessibility Policy P5 supports these key aims through enabling local people to access employment opportunities, therefore increasing prosperity. Public transport will be enhanced enabling those without access to cars to access jobs and employment therefore helping to narrow the gap between the most and least well off. In addition to this, businesses will be supported in increasing economic prosperity through encouraging the improvement of logistical arrangements for the transport of freight and servicing.
- 2.9 Policy P5 and the area based policies listed above will specifically help to achieve elements of the Prosperous and Cleaner and Greener themes within the Sustainable Community Strategy. This will be achieved through ensuring good accessibility to jobs and services, particularly in Bolton Town Centre, as well as providing the right infrastructure to support businesses across the borough. This will contribute to the main aim of *economic prosperity*. There will also be an emphasis on encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport.
- 2.10 Policy P5 will ultimately support better access for all with renewal areas as a key focus for transport improvements supporting the narrowing the gap aim.

## **Links to the Strategic Objectives**

- 2.11 Bolton is more self-contained, in terms of employment and commuting patterns than other districts in Greater Manchester. However, long-term trends show that the level of both out-commuting and in-commuting are increasing (See 2001 Census Report<sup>2</sup>). Bolton therefore has an increasing inter-dependency with other districts, especially adjoining districts and Manchester.
- 2.12 The basis of the council's strategic approach and Vision is explained in Background Document BD1<sup>3</sup>. Sixteen Strategic Objectives flow from the Spatial Vision and they are also explained in BD1. The following objectives are relevant to P5:
- Strategic Objective 6 – To ensure that transport infrastructure supports all the aspects of the spatial vision and that new development is in accessible locations and makes the best use of existing infrastructure. Policy P5 supports this through encouraging new development that takes account of transport accessibility via a variety of modes that are available to everyone.
  - Strategic Objective 10 - To minimise Bolton's contribution to climate change and mitigate and adapt to its adverse effects. This supports the need to encourage more sustainable modes of transport and improved accessibility in order to reduce associated greenhouse gas emissions, and thereby prevent climate change. Policy P5 supports this through encouraging new development that takes account of transport accessibility via a variety of modes that are available to everyone. An increased level of infrastructure will be encouraged to support this.
- 2.13 The accessibility policy has been framed to deliver the achievement of the vision and the Strategic Objectives 6 and 10.



## 3 Context

- 3.1 This section identifies the context against which Policy P5 has been prepared. It shows how the guidance, issues and information have been used to inform the final policies.

### National planning policy statements and guidance documents

- 3.2 The Core Strategy was prepared in the context of national policy and the following guidance is relevant to the Prosperous theme.

#### **PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development**

- 3.3 This PPS states that planning should seek to: *“Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle or public transport rather than having to rely on access by car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas.”*
- 3.4 And:
- “Reduce the need to travel and encourage accessible public transport provision to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development. Planning should actively manage patterns of urban growth to make the fullest use of public transport and focus development in existing centres and near to major public transport interchanges.”*
- 3.5 Policy P5 is consistent with and positively responds to these aims, in particular the need to create accessibility and reduce the need to travel, which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

#### **PPS12 Local Development Frameworks**

- 3.6 In the development of Core Strategy policies PPS12 states that *“Local authorities should undertake timely, effective and conclusive discussion with key stakeholders on what option(s) for a core strategy are deliverable.”* In relation to physical infrastructure this should include *“highways authority, Highways Agency, utilities companies, Network Rail, public transport providers, airport operators”*.
- 3.7 The development of Policy P5, and the Core Strategy generally, has been fully consistent with the requirements of PPS12.

#### **PPG13 Transport**

- 3.8 This PPG is the key guidance document relevant to transport. In general it states when preparing Development Plans local authorities should ensure that good accessibility is integral to new development, access is ingrained within urban areas that are principle focus for development, that jobs, services leisure are accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes, and ensure that the needs of disabled people are considered.
- 3.9 Manual for Streets provides best practice guidance on how to create well-designed residential streets that are at the heart of sustainable communities. It outlines the benefits of better designed streets as well as assigning a higher priority to pedestrians and cyclists in refocusing the place function of residential (low traffic) streets. Policy P5 has been

designed to reflect this guidance encouraging an emphasis on provision for walking and cycling within new developments and re-design.

- 3.10 Policy P5, and the Core Strategy as a whole, fully support these objectives and support the delivery of them at a strategic level, and are therefore fully consistent with this guidance.

## **Regional policy and evidence**

### **North West Regional Spatial Strategy**

- 3.11 Policy P5 has had full and proper regard to policies set out in the North West of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021, which has been prepared in the context of the North West Regional Economic Strategy (RES) (2006), Highways Agency Advice Forecasts (2007), the North West Employment Land Study (2005) and the Northern Way Growth Strategy.
- 3.12 Policy P5 has been developed to conform to the spatial principles set out in policies DP1, DP2, DP5, DP6, and DP9 of the RSS. Of particular relevance P5 focuses on supporting sustainable communities through increasing accessibility between homes, workplaces, services and leisure facilities. There is also support for the promotion of sustainable transport modes and the lowering of emissions, and a need to ensure that businesses are serviced by appropriate transport links.
- 3.13 Policy P5 has been developed to reflect the RSS Transport in the North West policies RT1, RT2, RT3, RT4, RT7, and RT9. Of particular relevance is the support for fully accessible multi modal transport systems, reducing the need for cars, investment in transport gateways, the management and movement of freight, and the promotion and development of walking and cycling.
- 3.14 Within the Spatial Framework policy RDF1 establishes that the first priority for growth should be the regional centres of Manchester and Liverpool, followed by the inner areas surrounding those centres. The third priority includes the town of Bolton. Policy P5 fits with the spatial framework set out in MCR1 through supporting sustainable communities in the north of the Manchester City Region. This stresses the need to provide enhanced public transport facilities between new housing developments and disadvantaged neighbourhoods with areas of economic growth. It also encourages plans that support Manchester City Region priorities.

### **North West Plan Partial Review**

- 3.15 A partial revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the North West, published in September 2008, is currently underway, the North West Plan Partial Review (NWPPR). The draft submission document contains two new policies (L6 and L7) proposed for inclusion in the RSS that deal with the accommodation needs for Gypsy & Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople communities, and a revision to an existing RSS policy (Policy RT2) covering specific matters on Regional Car Parking Standards. In relation to car parking standards the draft document recommends the option of adopting revised parking standards on the basis of improved sustainability objectives. This would generally assume an overall reduction in car parking space provision, and support better provision for cyclists and other forms of active transport and an emphasis on access for the disabled. This supports the detail set out in Policy P5 of the Core Strategy.

## Other plans, strategies and evidence

### **Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2**

- 3.16 The Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2 is a statutory document prepared under the Transport Act 2000. It is a 5-year strategy for the management, maintenance, development and monitoring of the areas transport system and was prepared together by the ten City and Metropolitan Borough Councils and Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (GMPTA) with the input of local stakeholders. It has a emphasis on improving accessibility and promoting sustainable forms of transport. Policy P5 has been designed in accordance with this plan.

### **Transport modelling for Greater Manchester**

- 3.17 Modelling work is currently being undertaken at the Greater Manchester level to assess the transport impact of the proposals in all Greater Manchester councils' emerging Core Strategies. Bolton Council has received a draft report on the initial runs of the Strategic Planning and Transport models, and is working to identify solutions from the issues raised. One of the key outputs of the model recognises the need to focus on smarter choice measures, but also to improve on those implemented to date and seek good practice examples.
- 3.18 The Core Strategy's overall spatial approach supports the potential to make smarter choices and to minimise trips by private transport. Its concentration on development in Bolton town centre and the renewal areas means that those locations that are most accessible by public transport, cycling and walking will see the most growth in housing, and employment and leisure opportunities. Where new development is proposed along the M61 corridor, the Council is working with developers and landowners to ensure that sustainable modes of transport are fully integrated.

### **Coming to Bolton: Town Centre Transport Strategy**

- 3.19 Policy P5 has been designed to reflect the Town Centre Transport Strategy (TCTS) which aims to provide an efficient, sustainable transport system that will offer a realistic choice of transport modes to and within Bolton town centre, and thus improve the accessibility of the town centre. Through improved pedestrian, cycling and public transport facilities, the strategy will encourage a model shift. This is supported and encouraged policies TC1, TC2, TC3, TC4, TC5, TC6, TC7, TC8, TC9, TC10 and TC11 within the Core Strategy.

### **Public Transport Accessibility Mapping**

- 3.20 Policy P5 has been developed in consideration of a transport accessibility mapping exercise that assessed the level of access to public transport and a range of destinations including key employment sites, Bolton Town Centre, GP surgeries, retail centres, education establishments and the hospital by bus and by walking. This allowed for the identification of areas with a lower access to public transport and particular destinations. The results demonstrate that all the urban areas of the borough enjoy good levels of accessibility generally, although there are some issues in relation to certain destinations such as the hospital which is a single resource.

- 3.21 In addition Policy P5 was designed in consideration of the evidence set out in the following:
- Bolton Council and JMP Consulting (2004) Bolton Transport Study
  - Bolton Council (2007) Great Lever and Farnworth Neighbourhood Management Areas: Accessibility Audit.
  - Census (2001) Travel to Work in Bolton Data.
  - Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (2007) Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Strategy, Corridor Partnership No. 7 Manchester-Salford Central-Farnworth-Bolton-Lostock/Bromley Cross
  - Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (2006) Transport Statistics Bolton 2005
  - Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (2007) Transport Statistics Bolton 2006.
  - Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (2008) Accidents at Junctions Data

## 4 Council Approach

### Core Strategy Key Issues

- 4.1 A series of issues were identified for consideration at the Key Issues stage. Those relating to Prosperous Policy P5 (Accessibility) were:
- G3 Improving accessibility
  - EC5 Ensuring that new development has good transport access
- 4.2 Responses to the Key Issues stage highlighted that the priority area of “Improving the economy and investment opportunities” should be used for the Core Strategy. The Council’s Options work and subsequent Policy P5 (accessibility) and the relevant area specific policies have been framed in the light of the following responses:
- Need to address the multi-functional nature of the Bolton-Bury Canal, to restore the Canal to full navigation including connection to Bolton town centre.
  - New developments should be located in the most accessible locations
  - Improve accessibility (cycle routes, footpaths etc).
  - Create a transport interchange at Great Moor Street.
  - Improve public transport.
  - Climate change issues – tackled through sustainable development patterns reducing the need to travel.
  - Spread development across the borough to improve the public transport system.

### Core Strategy Issues and Options

- 4.3 Background Document BD1<sup>10</sup> describes the Issues and Options report process and outcomes.
- 4.4 The Issues and Options Stage report states that the options for the overall location of new development are set down in the spatial options paragraphs 6a27 – 6a35, reflecting the objectives of the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan. But the Council must also take into account the suitability of transport and access arrangements in determining individual planning applications. There are no realistic options for transport and access considerations in Development Control policies, except in the case of parking. These options were:

#### **TA1 A**

**Use the maximum parking standards as set down in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy**

#### **TA1 B**

**Set lower maximum parking standards than the draft Regional Spatial Strategy across the Borough.**

#### **TA1 C**

**Set lower maximum parking standards than the draft Regional Spatial Strategy along key transport corridors and in Town Centre.**

- 4.5 In response to consultation on the Issues and Options Report the following main issues were taken into consideration in the development of Prosperous Policies P5 of the Core Strategy:
- The need for travel plans for major traffic generating developments
  - Impact on congestion
  - Impact on air quality
  - Need to design development in such a way to encourage penetration by public transport
  - Canal towpaths can encourage healthy and sustainable transport routes for boating, walking and cycling
  - To safeguard by way of a policy, the route of a bypass (A5225) to the east of Westhoughton.
  - High levels of car use must be accepted but managed and supported appropriately.
  - A range of transport modes should be supported.
  - Encourage walking and cycling modes.
  - Improve access to employment through improved transport links.
  - Improve accessibility for deprived areas.
  - Poor disabled access to town centre.
  - Development should be encouraged in areas with existing infrastructure.
  - Deliver gateway improvements
  - Rail station improvements, along with increased levels of park and ride facilities.

## **Core Strategy Preferred Options**

- 4.6 The following general responses, concerning transport and access, were made at the preferred options stage:
- The need to demonstrate greater consideration for the implications of transport infrastructure in relation to major development.
  - Promotion and support public transport, walking and cycling in order to ease congestion and reduce greenhouse gases.
  - Improved transport links to key employment sites, particularly from deprived areas.
  - Detailed requirements of the Transport and Access policy will be set out in a supporting SPD.

## Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.7 Following a sustainability appraisal of the Preferred Spatial Option the following comments were made in relation to P5, contributing to its development:

### **Retailing and employment land**

- 4.8 The provision and location of employment land will have an impact on transport systems; this is largely dependent on where it is located.

### **The Built Environment**

- 4.9 This option will have limited influence in improving accessibility. Although design can influence accessibility i.e. through making pedestrian routes more user friendly. This option will not help to improve the provision of effective integrated transport systems.

### **Transport and Access**

- 4.10 Promoting a balanced approach to parking standards will help to ensure jobs and training opportunities are available to all. Setting maximum standards as set down in the RSS across the borough except in accessible locations may help to support businesses by ensuring they are accessible. This may be a more attractive option to investors who wish to maximise the accessibility of their developments. More investment in the borough can have beneficial impacts on local and existing businesses.
- 4.11 Setting lower standards along the key transport corridors and in Bolton town centre may encourage more people to use public transport rather than taking the car. This may cut congestion and commuting and delivery times which can positive benefits on businesses in the borough and help to create a transformed, vibrant town centre.
- 4.12 Considering the accessibility of developments by public transport, cycling and walking in determining planning applications can help to reduce the need to travel. Although this transport and access policy will not directly improve public transport provision or affordability; indirectly if more people use public transport, provision may improve. (E.g. more bus routes could become commercially viable, leading to a better and more frequent service; this could lead to cheaper fares.)

## 5 Conclusions

### Summary of policy formulation

- 5.1 Policy P5 was developed as response to the identified need of improving access between residential areas and sites for employment and leisure, with a particular focus on improving access to the Renewal Areas. This reflects the Sustainable Community Strategy aims of *Narrowing the Gap* and *Increasing Prosperity* and is in line with the North West RSS and national policy set out in PPS 1, PPS12 and PPG13.
- 5.2 The policy has been shaped by several evidence base studies, and has been subject to rigorous consultation at Preferred Options stage.

### Soundness

- 5.3 The council considers Prosperous policy P5 and its contribution to the overall Core Strategy sound as it is:

#### Consistent with National Policy

- 5.4 This Background Document shows that the spatial vision and objectives are in accordance with national policy.

#### Justified

- **Founded on robust and credible Evidence Base**

- 5.5 This Background Document shows that policy P5 is based on a robust and credible evidence base including the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2, Bolton Transport Study and Public Transport Accessibility Mapping. It also considers the results of public consultations. Representations have been accounted for and incorporated in to the policy.

- **The most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives**

- 5.6 This Background Document shows that the Council has chosen a policy that best reflects the available evidence. It also shows that the Council has developed this policy through a process of publicly consulting upon the contents of the strong and confident policies, and then adjusting them to reflect consultation responses. The policies have also been objectively assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal and Environmental Impact Assessment.

#### Effective

- **Deliverable**

- 5.7 Prosperous policy P5 (Accessibility) will be delivered by Bolton Council through the development control process, and through the Allocations DPD. Any complaints relating to them will be dealt with by planning enforcement.

- **Flexible**

- 5.8 Prosperous policy P5 (Accessibility) is flexible because it does not prescribe specific plans and actions but is based upon principles that should be implemented to support future development. In this way the extent to which it is delivered will reflect the level of development that takes place.



- **Capable of being monitored**

- 5.9 A clear target around the level of residential development that is delivered within 30 minutes public transport time of employment sites has been set for Policy P5. Systems are already in place to enable their monitoring and subsequent reporting within the Council's AMR.

<b>Measuring Delivering – Prosperous - Accessibility (P5)</b>
<b>Strategic Objectives met:</b> SO6, SO10
<b>Indicators (and targets)</b>
Proportion of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of areas of employment (100%)
<b>Flexibility and phasing</b>
The Council will apply this policy flexibly by considering it as part of an assessment of the costs and benefits of a development.

**References:**

1. Bolton: Our Vision 2007-2017
2. 2001 Census Report: Travel to Work in Bolton (2006)
3. Core Strategy Background Document BD1 Core Strategy Overall Spatial Vision and Objectives
4. PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
5. PPS12 Local Development Frameworks
6. PPG13 Transport
7. GMPTA (2006) Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2: 2006/7 – 2010/11
8. Bolton Council (2007) Coming to Bolton: Town Centre Transport Strategy
9. Bolton Council (2008) Public Transport Accessibility Mapping
10. Core Strategy Background Document BD1 Core Strategy Overall Spatial Vision and Objectives