

Local Development Framework

Bolton's Core Strategy
Background Document – BD5
Safe Bolton
November 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 support the publication version of the Bolton Core Strategy.
- 1.2 This Background Document covers the **Safe** theme policy, and also policies for the spatial areas which deliver that theme.
- Safe theme policies:
- **Policy S1 – Safer Bolton**
- 1.3 One area policy relates to this theme:
- Policy TC11 – Design and the built environment in the town centre (*“Ensure streets are designed in accordance with the Public Realm Implementation Framework to achieve a high standard of design which exhibits safety, consistency and accessibility, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport”*).
- 1.4 Each Background Paper 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; and
 - Conclusions on soundness.
- 1.5 In general, evidence is based on the following sources:
- Specific studies prepared to address issues to be covered in the LDF;
 - Comments received from consultation responses;
 - Information and guidance provided by the Sustainability Appraisal; and
 - Existing national, regional and local policies and strategies such as national planning policy statements or the Sustainable Community Plan.
- 1.6 All documents referenced are held within the Public Examination Core Document Library.

2 Background

- 2.1 A safer community is a more sustainable community. By the end of the plan period the aim is to make people in Bolton safer by reducing crime and the fear of crime, prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour, and improve road safety.
- 2.2 Core Strategy Policy S1 outlines the ways in which spatial planning will contribute towards the Council's safety aims, including crime and road safety. It states:
- “The Council and its partners will:
1. Ensure that the design of new development will take into account the need to reduce crime and the fear of crime.
 2. Promote road safety in the design of new development.
 3. Target expenditure on road safety to locations with the worst safety record.”
- 2.3 These policies apply equally across the borough. This is in contrast to other policies which seek to target resources into renewal areas in order to ‘narrow the gap’, and to promote economic prosperity.
- 2.4 The policy above is intended to achieve the strategic vision set out in various documents outlined below, principally the Community Strategy. The overall vision is that in 2026 Bolton will be a sustainable community.

Links to the Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.5 The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) pledges to “further reduce crime and the fear of crime”, “prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour”, and “make our roads safer”. Policy S1 supports and helps to deliver these aims of the SCS.

Links to the Strategic Objectives

- 2.6 Strategic Objective 9 reflects the SCS in its aim to “reduce crime and the fear of crime, and improve road safety by ensuring that neighbourhoods are attractive and well designed.”
- 2.7 The Core Strategy's most important direct contribution to reducing crime and the fear of crime is through the design of new development. A contributory factor to improving safety is to create and sustain a sense of place that enables people to identify with their surroundings or locality. This can be achieved through appropriate layout, high quality architecture, good lighting and landscape design.
- 2.8 Other parts of the Core Strategy tackle crime indirectly through ensuring the availability of affordable housing and access to training and employment, and through concentrating investment and development in those areas with the highest crime rates to try and reduce them.

- 2.9 The Core Strategy will maximise road safety in new development and influence where investment in safety schemes takes place; investment is directed towards locations with the worst safety record (as in the Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan).
- 2.10 Crime includes terrorism, and design should include consideration of how developments can be made less vulnerable to such attacks. This is an evolving area of policy. Crowded places are considered particularly at risk, including:
- Bars, Pubs and Night Clubs;
 - Restaurants and Hotels;
 - Shopping Centres;
 - Sports and Entertainment Stadia;
 - Cinemas and Theatres;
 - Visitor Attractions;
 - Major Events;
 - Commercial Centres;
 - Health sector;
 - Education sector; and
 - Religious sites/places of worship.

3 Context

- 3.1 This section identifies the policy and research context in which the Safe policies have been prepared
- 3.2 The Safe policy must conform to national guidance and regional policy. Below is a list of relevant National Planning Policy Statements (PPS) or Guidance Notes (PPG), Regional Policy (RSS) and sub regional studies, local strategy & the evidence base, which underpin the policy.

National planning policy statements and guidance documents

- 3.3 The Core Strategy was prepared in the context of national policy and the following guidance is relevant to the Safe theme:

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development

- 3.4 This contains a number of policy directions which support the aims of the Safe theme, including:
- Paragraph 13 (vi): “community involvement is an essential element in delivering sustainable development and creating sustainable and safe communities. In developing the vision for their areas, planning authorities should ensure that communities are able to contribute to ideas about how that vision can be achieved, have the opportunity to participate in the process of drawing up the vision, strategy and specific plan policies, and to be involved in development proposals.”
 - Paragraph 16 (v): “Development plans should promote development that creates socially inclusive communities, including suitable mixes of housing. Plan policies should ... deliver safe, healthy and attractive places to live.”
 - Paragraph 27: “Planning authorities should seek to ... (ii) promote high quality and safe development, (iii) promote communities which are inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free
- 3.5 Policy S1 will apply these aims by helping create a built environment with reduced opportunities for crime, including measures to design out crime and reduce fear of crime. This is supplemented by other policies. It will directly address road safety, thereby delivering safer and more attractive places to live.

PPG 13 Transport

- 3.6 This contains a number of policy directions which support the aims of the Safe theme, including:
- “The physical form and qualities of a place, shape – and are shaped by – the way it is used and the way people and vehicles move through it. ... People should come before traffic. Places that work well are designed to be used safely and securely by all in the community, frequently for a wide range of purposes and throughout the day

and evening. Local authorities in partnership with the police should promote designs and layouts which are safe (both in terms of road safety and personal security) and take account of crime prevention and community safety considerations.” (Paragraph 28)

- “The Government places great emphasis on people being able to travel safely whatever their chosen mode. The planning system has a substantial influence on the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and occupants of vehicles through the design and layout of footpaths, cycleways and roads. Planning can also influence road safety through its control of new development. ...” (Paragraph 29)

Policy S1 will apply these aims by directly addressing road safety, particularly by targeting expenditure on road safety to locations with the worst safety record.

Regional policy and evidence

North West Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.7 Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) sets out the regional development policy:
- It promotes sustainable communities through an integrated approach to different land uses and supporting infrastructure (DP2)
 - In particular policy DP2 promotes “community safety and security”.
 - Policy DP5 promotes “safe and sustainable access for all”.
 - Policy RT9 promotes “safe routes for walking and cycling ... including secure cycle parking. ... scheme promoters should take the opportunity to enhance walking and cycling provision, including crossings, signage, lane markings, allocation or re-allocation of road space, and off-road routes wherever possible.”
- 3.8 Policy S1 draws on this approach and will put these aims into effect in Bolton.

Other plans, strategies and evidence

- 3.9 Road safety measures are targeted at areas identified through cluster analysis of accidents, not other criteria such as regeneration areas (although often these areas are similar). This includes both ‘hard’ measures such as junction engineering, and ‘soft’ measures such as education in schools. Areas identified for improvement in Bolton include the town centre, Astley Bridge, and residential areas in inner Bolton (south of the town centre). This is based on LTP-2 (see below).
- 3.10 The following Bolton LDF Evidence base document is relevant and has informed the policy in the Safe theme.
- Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (2006) Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2: 2006/7-2010/11.

3.11 A variety of Greater Manchester sub-regional strategies have flowed from policies set out in RSS. The following are relevant and have informed the policy in the Safe section:

- BSAFE Partnership (2005) Crime, Disorder and Drugs Misuse Reduction Strategy 2005-2008.
- Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (2008) Accidents at Junctions Data

4 Council Approach

- 4.1 This section charts the policy and strategy formulation process through the stages in order to demonstrate how the current proposals have been developed.

Core Strategy Key Issues

- 4.2 Background document BD1 describes the Key Issues Report process.
- 4.3 A series of issues were identified for consideration at the Key Issues stage. Those relating to the Safe theme are:
- G7 Planning policies for determining planning applications;
 - S5 Improving Safety;
 - EC5 Ensuring that new development has good transport access; and
 - EN3 promoting good design.
- 4.4 With the publication of the Key Issues Report Bolton Council provided a series of consultation opportunities for local people. A number of consultation responses were received including the following points:
- The layout of estates should include safe, off-road footpaths and cycle paths. Paths should be wide, well lit, overlooked by houses and not lined with dense bushes;
 - Places should feel safe;
 - Improved roads and pavements - safer road crossing and fewer trip hazards.
- 4.5 The consultation responses at Key Issues stage also include responses made in relation to an abandoned Housing DPD. These were merged and carried forward into the Issues and Options report.
- 4.6 The key issues process built on the current UDP , including its theme of 'social progress which recognises the needs of everyone' (T3) and the following objectives:
- Increase safety and sense of security; and
 - Provide accessible, high quality and safe integrated public transport services and reduce the need to travel by car.

Core Strategy Issues and Options

- 4.7 Background document BD1 describes the Issues and Options report process.
- 4.8 The four options discussed had the same implications, i.e. safety considerations will be addressed by development control policies as appropriate.

- 4.9 Two spatial implications relating to safety were stated :
- Reducing crime and the fear of crime by ensuring that neighbourhoods are attractive and well designed; and
 - Making our roads safer.
- 4.10 Consultation responses were received including the following points:
- ‘Designing out crime’ is important; projects should be designed to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and seek to achieve the Secured by Design Award
 - Open spaces should be made safer regarding crime
 - Safety and security is particularly important for disabled people.

Core Strategy Preferred Options

- 4.11 Background document BD1 describes the Preferred Options report process.
- 4.12 Paragraphs 3.35-3.40 deal specifically with the Safe theme. These note while there has been significant progress recently – for example in falling crime rates – further improvements are needed in both crime and road safety.
- 4.13 Spatial issues identified include:
- Bolton’s recorded crime levels are reducing but perception of crime remains high;
 - To continue to reduce child fatalities on roads;
 - The need to provide fatalities for young people.
- 4.14 In order to achieve these aims, Strategic Objective 7 (see above) is complemented by Strategic Objective 6, which is “to ensure that transport infrastructure supports all the aspects of the spatial vision and that new development makes the best use of existing infrastructure.”
- 4.15 Spatial Option 2 (the preferred option), by encouraging development in the renewal areas, will have benefits in improving the built environment including road layouts and secure design in those areas.
- 4.16 The following policies were proposed (Policy 8):
- “The Council and its partners will:
1. Ensure that the design of new development will take into account the need to reduce crime and the fear of crime.
 2. Promote road safety in the design of new development.
 3. Target expenditure on road safety to locations with the worst safety record.”

- 4.17 This is the same as in the core strategy publication document. Implementation is to be through Greater Manchester Police and LTP-2. Monitoring is through recorded crime, perceptions of anti-social behaviour, and road accident numbers (adults and children killed or seriously injured).
- 4.18 No consultation responses were received directly relating to this theme.

Core Strategy Publication Document

- 4.19 The Core Strategy Publication Document (CSP) policies ensure that improved design will address crime and the fear of crime, and that road safety will be improved. It reaffirms the basic approach of the Preferred Spatial Option.
- 4.20 Paragraphs 5.36-5.39 of the CSP describe the policy approach.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.21 The preferred option is assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) as having the following impacts:
- **Spatial:** The preferred option helps to provide a safe and pleasant environment by providing jobs, homes, services and prosperity. It promotes sustainable, cohesive communities and minimising opportunities for antisocial behaviour. Targeting development in the Renewal Areas may improve the prospects of these areas and lead to a reduction in crime and the fear of crime. Maximising development along key transport corridors may reduce car traffic and so improve road safety if more people use public transport or walk/cycle.
 - **Employment Land:** The preferred option improves the economic prospects of the borough and therefore may help to reduce crime.
 - **Retailing:** Indirectly, more retail floor space may improve the economic prospects of the borough and therefore may have a minor impact on reducing crime.
 - **Built environment development management:** Good design can help to create a safe and secure environment and design out crime. Creating a strong sense of place and improving perceptions of areas can help to tackle antisocial behaviour.
 - **Sustainable Design and Construction:** No impact.
 - **Use Considerations:** Ensuring that new developments do not have adverse impacts on safety can make a minor contribution to a safer environment.
 - **Transport & Access:** This preferred option may lead to fewer car journeys. This could help to cut congestion and therefore air pollution and lead to safer roads.
 - **Planning Contributions:** More community facilities can help to prevent antisocial behaviour by providing opportunities for recreation and socialising. The list of infrastructure covers transport of all types including public transport, cycling and walking which can contribute to road safety.

5 Conclusions

Summary of policy formulation

- 5.1 Various mechanisms have been influential in policy development and formulation including the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy, the requirements of national and regional planning policy, locally produced evidence, sustainability appraisal and public consultation.

Soundness

- 5.2 The council considers the policies and their contribution to the overall Core Strategy sound as they are:

Consistent with National Policy

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

Justified

- **Founded on robust and credible evidence base**

- 5.3 This Background Document shows that the spatial vision and objectives are based on a robust and credible evidence base including factual information, studies, strategies and consultation

- **Most appropriate alternatives**

- 5.4 This Background Document shows that the Council has put different forward options and has chosen a spatial vision that best reflects the available evidence, although there was no difference in the implications for this them. It also shows that the Council has developed objectives through a process of putting forward possible objectives based on the Community Strategy, and then adjusted them to reflect consultation responses and to ensure that they are based on spatial planning.

Effective

- 5.5 The delivery of the Core Strategy spatial vision and objectives is through the Core Strategy policies, and is considered in greater detail in the Background Documents supporting the policies.

- **Deliverable**

- 5.6 In principle the Core Strategy will be delivered by funding from Bolton Council and its partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors, through the Allocations Development Plan Document and supplementary planning documents.

- **Flexible**

5.7 The Core Strategy spatial vision is flexible in that it identifies a range of different locations for development. There is no over reliance on specific locations and changing circumstances will allow investment to come forward in different locations and with flexible phasing.

- **Capable of being monitored**

5.8 Monitoring will be through a combination of monitoring the progress of physical development, and also through the use of outcome indicators as stated in the following table.

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