


Oxford Core Strategy Examination Statement of Oxford City Council		www.oxford.gov.uk  OXFORD CITY COUNCIL
C/M7/2	Matter 7 – Transport Issue 2 – Sustainable transport	

i) How will the policies actually achieve the desired goal of reducing the need to travel?

The aim of reducing the need to travel underpins the Core Strategy, as reflected in the Spatial Strategy. The sequential approach to locating trip-generating development is set out in Policy CS1, in relating development to a hierarchy of centres. This is a strong tool, which complies with the guidance set out in PPS6 (paragraph 2.44, CD11/5), draft PPS4 (paragraph 18, CD11/18) and PPG13 (paragraph 6, CD11/21). The positive policy frameworks for community infrastructure (as set out in Policies CS16, CS17, CS18, CS21, CS22 for example), and the establishment of Neighbourhood Areas in the Spatial Strategy, also complement this approach, by reinforcing the identity of local communities and helping to ensure that vital services are provided locally.

It should also be noted that the City Council has, in preparing the Core Strategy and, historically, in responding to RSS consultations, consistently recognised the inherent sustainability of Oxford in transport terms. Thus we have supported the designation of Oxford as a regional hub, and embraced opportunities to substantially increase the housing stock within the City, most significantly through successfully applying for New Growth Point Status. This support, which is reflected throughout the Core Strategy, has enabled much of the growth proposed for Central Oxfordshire to be focused in Oxford, where both work trip lengths and car modal share are historically much lower than elsewhere in the sub-region.

ii) Should public transport, cycling and walking have greater emphasis, with more detail spelt out as to what is to be done?

In the Council's view, these modes have been given due prominence in the strategy. The Core Strategy Vision (Section 2.1) states that "*Oxford will continue to find innovative ways to reduce the impact of traffic...*", whilst one of the strategic objectives (Section 2.2) is to "*promote a reduction in car use, minimise the impact of traffic, and encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.*" The Spatial Strategy (Section 3.2) goes on to say in the second sentence, "*One of the most important ways of reducing carbon emissions is to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car, and to encourage more sustainable modes of travel such as cycling and walking, buses and trains.*" Policy CS14, which is material to all

development, states that *“Planning permission will only be granted that prioritises access by walking, cycling and public transport. A transport assessment and comprehensive travel plan must accompany all major development proposals. Low-parking development and car clubs will be sought in locations highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport.”*

The Council also considers that Policy CS15 – Supporting City-wide movement sets out comprehensively the sustainable transport measures for which there is a reasonable prospect for delivery. These have been agreed with Oxfordshire County Council as the local transport authority, as reflecting the direction and headline measures that will be taken in LTP3 and the evolving Oxford Transport Strategy. The City Council is fully supportive of properly investigating more radical measures to encourage non-car travel, which could include congestion charging or a workplace parking levy, further restricting through-traffic movements in the City, or a City-wide intelligent transport system to afford buses priority access to the local road network. This is reflected in the final paragraph under heading ‘Supporting Accessibility to Oxford’, however it would be misleading to state these as policy given that there is currently no agreed means of delivering them.

iii) How will demand be managed and people encouraged to use non-car modes?

There are a number of elements to demand management in Oxford, as a means of encouraging people out of cars. These are briefly summarised in the table below, together with cross-reference to the Core Strategy, and the means of delivery. Also included are potential future measures that cannot be taken forward at this time, due to there being no satisfactory means of delivery as yet aspired to or identified by the County Council.

Measure	Core Strategy ref	Means of delivery
Reduce need to travel	Spatial Strategy, CS1, CS16, CS17, CS18, CS21, CS22	Hierarchy of centres, focus growth in Oxford, community infrastructure
Sustainable access improvements to strategic sites	CS5, CS6, CS7, CS8	Partnership working with developers, County Council, HA and others
Promote behavioural change to build on existing sustainable travel patterns	CS14	Travel planning, low parking provision (where appropriate), car clubs, controlled parking zones, partnership working with developers, County Council, HA and others
Promote physical measures to prioritise pedestrian, cycle and bus travel to and across Oxford	CS14, CS15	Orbital bus network, bus priority on radials and ring road approaches, public realm/interchange, cycle and pedestrian network improvements, cycle parking, 20mph speed limits

Park and ride sites inc. 'remote' sites	CS15	LTP3, partnership working with County and other district councils
'Intelligent traffic management' for bus priority throughout City	No policy	County Council to consider
Statutory traffic restrictions, congestion charge or parking levy	No policy	County Council to consider

iv) What evidence is there that the objectives of, and items set out in, Policy CS15 can be achieved?

As set out above, the measures set out in Policy CS15 have been agreed in discussion with the County Council as the local transport authority for Oxford. They have been developed under the constraint of the Local Transport Plan process being arranged in five-year tranches, hence there is currently no agreed comprehensive programme for local transport schemes beyond 2011. However the City Council is confident from its informal discussions with the County Council that all these objectives can be achieved.

It should be noted that some of the items are already being implemented or are agreed in principle, these being the Low Emissions Strategy and Low Emissions Zone (CD7/21 Committee Report refers); public realm improvements to the City centre and some District centres, and improving access to major employment sites in Headington and Marston (through HAMATS¹).

v) What funding is available and what would developers be expected to contribute?

Those measures which require funding will generally come forward in LTP3 and/or from pooled developer funding, although the amount and prioritisation of schemes will not be known until 2011 for the reasons explained above. Additional funding may be available from Access to Oxford, dependent on the detailed development of schemes.

Developer contributions will be sought in line with Policy CS18, which cross-refers to Section 5.1 and policies on the Strategic Sites in relation to transport and access improvements. The contribution that will be expected will generally depend on the type and scale of development, guided by the Planning Obligations SPD and forthcoming Streamlined Contributions SPD relating to the West End. Some measures may be expected to come forward on-site, to demonstrate compliance with the first sentence of Policy CS14, or where a specific route or corridor is shown on the Proposals Map, or where a transport assessment, travel plan or AAP identifies a need.

¹ Headington and Marston Area Transport Strategy

vi) The policies and deliverability are relatively vague – Can the Core Strategy be more specific, giving details against which progress could be better measured?

It is accepted that objectives in Policy CS15 are not precise in terms of timing and priority. However as argued above, this approach is necessary due to the timing of LTP3 and work on a revised Oxford Transport Strategy, hence the only available option is to set out measures in principle as agreed with the lead authority responsible for LTP3. This is nevertheless considered to be a realistic framework for the purpose of ensuring broad alignment with strategic land allocations and spatial development priorities, development management and developing local transport infrastructure. It should be noted that LTP3 will itself be accompanied by a more detailed monitoring framework, indeed it may be appropriate to cross-refer to this in the supporting text to Policy 15, if the Inspector is so minded.

vii) What changes are expected in particular areas, especially within the City centre?

It is assumed that the question refers to changes to local transport infrastructure. The key diagram shows where priority access improvements are sought, together with strategic improvements anticipated as part of Access to Oxford. These show the measures described in Section 5.1 – Transport and Accessibility, namely an improved orbital bus route, improvements to the London Road corridor (currently underway) and potential access corridors to integrate the SDA with the rest of Oxford.

The Spatial Strategy (Section 3) sets out the locations for focused growth, namely the strategic sites. Policies CS5 – CS9 identify key access improvements specific to these development. Section 3.5 – Place-shaping local areas of Oxford describes in some detail the main changes within the District areas, which relate back to the impact of the Core Strategy policies in each area.

Improvements to the City centre movement network are described in the adopted West End AAP (CD7/5). These are summarised in the supporting text to Policy CS14 (under the sub-heading '*West End*'). Key improvements are:

- Remodelling of Frideswide Square, a busy junction of roads with access to Oxford Station forecourt. As a major gateway into the City centre, the scheme will focus on environmental improvements, achieved in part by simplifying the layout of the junction to allow slower, smoother traffic movement, and more space given to pedestrian priority.

- Linked to the Frideswide Square scheme, an extension of the City centre bus priority route to give priority bus access from the Oxpens area, and improve the flow of general traffic.
- Pedestrianisation of Queen Street, supported by further improvements to the bus priority route. This will be complemented by redevelopment of the Westgate Shopping Centre, which will facilitate improvements to bus stopping arrangements, and contribute major public realm improvements in the Castle Street and Norfolk Street areas.
- Implementing a new cycle and pedestrian river crossing between Oxpens and West Oxford.

Complementing the West End improvements are shorter-term public realm and bus route improvements being implemented independently by the County Council as part of the Transform Oxford project (see CD8/6). The County Council and Network Rail are also taking forward an enlargement to Oxford Station on existing Network Rail land, as part of the Access to Oxford project.