

## Introduction

- 11.1** This Local Plan seeks to manage transport through promoting alternative modes of travel, infrastructure improvements and by allocating land for new development in areas which are well served by facilities and/or public transport. Transport considerations have been a key factor in influencing the location of development within this Plan, with the focus on Royal Tunbridge Wells and other town centres in order to avoid significant new development dispersed through the Borough's villages or throughout the countryside.
- 11.2** In order to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport, improvements are sought to these networks, and careful consideration will be given to the needs of the users of these networks.
- 11.3** To continue past patterns of development with associated patterns of transport and consumption is unsustainable. However, since parts of the Plan area are characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern, it will also be necessary to cater for the private car during the Plan period. By promoting alternatives to the car for access to new development and by reducing the amount of parking in new developments, more efficient use can be made of the land available for development, particularly in places with good public transport accessibility.
- 11.4** However, the Local Planning Authority does not control the transport system and complementary transportation and land use planning strategy is achieved through co-ordination with the relevant authorities.
- 11.5** The Department for Transport (via the Highways Agency) is responsible for trunk roads such as the A21. Construction, improvement and maintenance of other statutorily adopted highways are the responsibility of Kent County Council, as Highway Authority. In order to co-ordinate strategic transport provision, a Regional Transport Strategy has been produced by the South East England Regional Assembly.
- 11.6** The rail infrastructure and services are the responsibility of the Department for Transport, Network Rail and the Train Operating Companies. Bus services are provided by private transport operators, some of which are supported or procured by the Highway Authority or through planning agreements.
- 11.7** The Borough Council is responsible for management of public off-street parking within the Borough and, in conjunction with the Highway Authority, it has recently become responsible for the management of on-street parking.
- 11.8** The Kent Local Transport Plan provides strategic guidance for future transport provision in Kent. Government guidance advises that the strategy underpinning the Kent Local Transport Plan and the Local Plan should be complementary.
- 11.9** The Borough Council and Kent County Council have approved the Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2003) which, in conjunction with the Local Transport Plan and Local Plan, ensures that the strategies for transport and land use planning are complementary. The Strategy sets out a series of transport objectives for strategic transport provision affecting the Borough; Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, the small rural towns of Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, villages and the rest of the rural area.
- 11.10** This Chapter examines the transport and parking provision required to serve new development, safeguards routes for transport infrastructure and then sets out transport and parking proposals for each settlement where there is direct implication for land use planning.

### Aims

- 11.11** Set out below are transport and parking objectives for the Plan which relate directly to the use of land within the Borough:
1. To make suitable land use provision for strategic transport proposals, including new highway and rail infrastructure, within the Borough.
  2. To retain and enhance public parking provision serving the small rural towns of Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst and retain existing provision in Neighbourhood and Village Centres.
  3. To ensure that the layout and design of new development is readily accessible including safe and direct routes for pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility-impaired which link to existing networks.
  4. To ensure that new development is not detrimental to highway safety, either in terms of access onto the highway network or the level of traffic likely to be generated by the development.
  5. To ensure that the level of parking provided with new development enables the most effective use of land and reflects the proximity of local services and the availability of alternative transport provision.
  6. To make suitable parking provision for people with disabilities and cyclists as part of new development.
  7. To ensure that proposals for new development are accessible by a range of transport modes, including public transport, cycling and walking and, where appropriate, make suitable provision towards new transport and public parking infrastructure.

### Transport Provision with New Development

#### ACCESS TO NEW DEVELOPMENT

- 11.12** All development needs to ensure that it can be safely accessed.
- 11.13** Kent Design – a guide to sustainable development (2000) sets out access guidelines for new development and, in particular, includes the following principles:
- highway standards for private cars should reflect the provision of alternative modes of transport (buses, cycleways and pedestrian routes);
  - developments should be readily accessible with safe, direct routes for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility-impaired; and
  - new infrastructure for cycling, walking and riding should be linked into existing networks.
- 11.14** The sections below detail the transport infrastructure requirements for different types and scale of development.

#### Large-Scale Non-Residential Development

##### Transport Assessments

- 11.15** For the purpose of assessing large-scale non-residential developments, the thresholds set out in Table 7 will be used to identify the need for a full Transport Assessment and

Travel Plan to be prepared and submitted alongside any planning application. The thresholds reflect guidance provided by PPG13 and accord with those defined within the current Kent Vehicle Parking Standards.

**Table 7**

**Guidance on the thresholds above for which a full Transport Assessment and Travel Plan will be required for non-residential development are:**

Land Use Class	Threshold for Transport Assessments & Travel Plans
A1 Retail Establishments	1,000 sq m
A2 Financial & Professional Services	2,500 sq m
A3, A4 and A5 Food & Drink	400 sq m
B1 Office	2,500 sq m
B1 High Tech / Light Industrial	3,000 sq m
B2 General Industrial	5,000 sq m
B8 Storage & Distribution	10,000 sq m
B8 Wholesale Trade Distribution	3,000 sq m
C1 Hotels	100 parking spaces
C2 Residential Institutions	100 parking spaces
D1 Primary & Secondary Schools, Further & Higher Education Establishments	All new and expanded school facilities
D1 All Other Non-Residential Institutions	2,500 sq m
D2 Assembly & Leisure	1,000 sq m
D2 Stadia	1,500 seats
<p>Other unclassified uses or mixed developments on a scale considered by the Local Planning Authority to be major travel-generating development may require a full Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.</p> <p>Smaller-scale development considered by the Local Planning Authority to be located in a location where measuring the transport impact of a proposal is critical, or that is otherwise likely to have a prejudicial impact on the implementation of local transport strategies may require a full Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.</p>	

- 11.16** For large-scale proposals, the assessment should illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site. It should give details of proposed measures to improve access by public transport, walking and cycling, to reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal and to mitigate transport impacts. The content of Transport Assessments should reflect best practice.
- 11.17** These assessments will enable the Local Planning Authority to assess the application and provide a basis for discussion on details such as the level and location of parking and the need to improve access to the site for all modes. When considering proposals to improve access to the site, relevant proposals of the Local Transport Plan and Borough Transport Strategy should be taken into consideration. The provision of, and/or contributions towards, measures identified in these strategies may resolve the access needs for a development.
- 11.18** Transport Assessments should provide the basis for consideration of the level of parking to be provided in conjunction with larger non-residential developments falling

outside the Tunbridge Wells Central Parking Zone (Commercial). PPG13 advises that incentives should not be created for development to locate away from town centres, by allowing excessive levels of car parking to be provided to serve new development in other areas. Where there is a need to improve access to a peripheral development or one currently poorly served by a range of transport, and the need for measures to be provided is identified in a Transport Assessment, the level of parking provided should be lowered accordingly.

### Travel Plans

- 11.19** In accordance with Government guidance, Travel Plans should be treated as equally important as the other transport infrastructure and mitigation measures addressed in a Transport Assessment. Travel Plans are promoted to help raise awareness of the impacts of travel decisions and as a mechanism for the delivery of sustainable transport objectives, including:
- reductions in car usage (particularly single occupancy journeys) and increased use of public transport, walking and cycling;
  - reduced traffic speeds and improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists; and
  - more environmentally friendly delivery and freight movements.
- 11.20** Travel Plans should be submitted alongside planning applications which are likely to have significant transport implications as set out in Table 7 above. Travel Plans may be used to identify measures which would reduce the level of potential traffic impact of development proposals.
- 11.21** Travel Plans should be worked up in consultation with the Local Planning Authority and local transport providers. They might be designed for applicant development only or be part of a wider initiative in co-operation with other occupiers. Plans should comply with best practice. For example, they should include measurable outputs and arrangements for monitoring and review in the event that agreed objectives are not met.
- 11.22** In the case of speculative development it may be difficult to fully detail all aspects of a Travel Plan in the absence of a known occupier. However, the developer will be required to submit proposals for the development of a Travel Plan with the application.

#### **POLICY TP1**

**Proposals for large-scale non-residential development will be required to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan to demonstrate the adequacy of transport infrastructure to serve the development.**

**Where adequate transport infrastructure is not available to serve the development, the Local Planning Authority will seek the provision of, or contributions towards, appropriate measures which will address the identified inadequacy and which assist walking, cycling, public transport, other highway improvements and/or Park and Ride provision.**

**Transport Assessments and Travel Plans should also accompany development proposals for new or significantly expanded schools, and may also be required by the Local Planning Authority in support of a development which would otherwise be unacceptable due to the level of traffic which would be generated.**

### Smaller-Scale Non-Residential Development

- 11.23** Non-residential development of a smaller scale than that requiring a full Transport Assessment or Travel Plan (see Table 7) can nevertheless have a significant impact on the local transport infrastructure. It is equally important that such development is well-linked to all modes of transport.
- 11.24** Non-residential proposals of 500 square metres, or expecting more than 50 person trips on any day of the week, will be required to be accompanied by an outline statement of Transport Assessment. The outline statement should describe the scale and modes of transport provision required and identify improvements to transport provision that are proposed. The outline statement may be utilised in identifying appropriate car parking provision and, where appropriate, should refer to relevant initiatives and proposals in the Borough Transport Strategy.
- 11.25** The scale and range of transport provision needed to serve a proposed development will be dependent on its size and location. This Local Plan focuses non-residential development on existing Town, Neighbourhood or Village Centres. However, these locations sometimes require improved infrastructure within, and from, the centre, such as footways, cycleways, crossing points, bus infrastructure and roads. Sites not located within a defined centre are likely to require considerably greater improvements to transport infrastructure which connects with the residential areas likely to be served by the development.
- 11.26** Exceptionally, a full Transport Assessment or Travel Plan may be required for smaller developments in a location where measuring the local transport impact of a proposal is critical, or where the proposal would otherwise be likely to have a prejudicial impact on the implementation of local transport strategies. Where a proposal necessitates highway improvements, the developer will be required to meet the cost of the improvements where these are fairly and reasonably related to the development.

#### **POLICY TP2**

**Proposals for smaller-scale non-residential development in excess of 500 square metres gross floorspace, or expecting more than 50 person trips on any day of the week, will be required to be accompanied by an outline statement of Transport Assessment.**

**Where adequate transport infrastructure is not available to serve a development, the Local Planning Authority will seek provision of, or contribution towards, appropriate measures which will address the identified inadequacy and which assist walking, cycling, public transport, other highway improvements and/or Park and Ride provision.**

### Residential Development

- 11.27** Residential development represents the origin of most trips. Where larger-scale development is proposed, it is important that the development incorporates safe pedestrian and cycle provision which is not dominated by the needs of the car. Furthermore, the sites should be well-linked by all modes of transport to key destinations such as a defined Primary Shopping Area, Neighbourhood or Village Centre or Economic Development Area. This may require provision of, for example, a new footway, cycleway or road crossing facility and relevant proposals of the Local Transport Plan and Borough Transport Strategy will be taken into consideration. The requirements for access to the road network are set out in POLICY TP4. For the purposes of this Plan, larger-scale residential development is taken as sites of 0.4

hectares or greater, or 15 dwellings or more, whichever is the lower. A Transport Assessment is likely to be required for sites of 50 dwellings or more. The threshold of 50 dwellings is in accordance with the current Kent Vehicle Parking Standards.

### **POLICY TP3**

**Proposals for larger-scale residential development should demonstrate how the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and buses are met, including:**

- **the provision of new or improved segregated footways and cycleways within the site and convenient and safe links to key destinations such as a defined Primary Shopping Area, Neighbourhood or Village Centre, Economic Development Area, a school and public transport provision; and**
- **scheme layouts which facilitate bus access and maximise bus patronage, together with the provision of facilities such as shelters and seating.**

**Proposals which will have significant transport implications should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment to demonstrate the adequacy of transport infrastructure to serve the development.**

**Where adequate transport infrastructure is not available to serve the development, the Local Planning Authority will seek the provision of, or contributions towards, appropriate measures which will address the identified inadequacy and which assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements.**

### **Access to the Road Network**

- 11.28** The overall approach of the strategy for transport and land use planning is to locate development where the choice of transport mode is maximised. The Road Traffic Reduction Act requires a reduction in traffic growth. However, access to the road network will remain important in the control of development as an instrument in achieving a safe highway network. This is particularly important in a Plan area containing a number of roads which have severe width restrictions and poor alignment.
- 11.29** The Department for Transport's current policies in relation to trunk roads, such as the A21, are set out in Government circulars.
- 11.30** The Kent Structure Plan 1996 and the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006 identify a hierarchy of roads throughout the county. The Kent Structure Plan 1996 and the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006 state that the construction of new accesses or the intensification of existing accesses onto the defined inter-urban primary or secondary routes will be refused where an increased risk of accidents or significant traffic delays may result. Furthermore, it is expected that traffic should be well related to this network. The Kent Structure Plan 1996 and the Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006 do not classify the function of roads within individual built up areas. A detailed listing of the road hierarchy within settlements is set out in Appendix 6 against which proposals affecting both existing and proposed roads can be assessed.

**POLICY TP4**

Proposals will be permitted provided all of the following criteria are satisfied:

- 1 The road hierarchy and the function of routes (as set out in Appendix 6) have adequate capacity to cater for the traffic which will be generated by the development, taking into account the use of, and provision for, alternative modes to the private car;
- 2 A safely located access with adequate visibility exists or could be created;
- 3 Within the Limits to Built Development, as defined on the Proposals Map, an additional access or the intensification of use of an existing access directly onto a Primary or District distributor, would not significantly worsen traffic conditions in terms of delay or the risk of accidents;
- 4 Outside the Limits to Built Development, as defined on the Proposals Map, the development would not involve the provision of an additional access or the intensification of use of an existing access directly onto a Primary or Secondary route; and
5. The traffic generated by the proposal does not compromise the safe and free flow of traffic or the safe use of the road by others. Where a proposal necessitates highway improvements, the developer will be required to meet the cost of the improvements where these are fairly and reasonably related to the development.

## Parking Provision with New Development

### Kent Vehicle Parking Standards

- 11.31** In February 1999, Kent County Council as Highway Authority adopted new maximum parking standards for all new developments in line with advice in PPG13. Subsequently, revised parking standards were adopted in 2003 as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006, in the light of more recent advice in Regional Planning Guidance for the South-East (RPG 9) and the revision of PPG13, which stress the need for parking restraint, in pursuit of the aim of reducing car use. This is also advocated in Kent Design – a guide to sustainable development (2000) which looks at parking provision within an overall demand managed system and, of most importance, promotes developments with increased densities and constrained parking provision.
- 11.32** The latest vehicle parking standards document adopted by Kent County Council are adopted by the Local Planning Authority as Supplementary Planning Guidance as they form part of Kent Design, and should apply to new development subject to the following exceptions:
- residential development within the Tunbridge Wells Central Access Zone (POLICY TP6);
  - non-residential development within the Tunbridge Wells Central Parking Zone (POLICY TP7);
  - small-scale changes of use to non-residential uses (POLICY TP8);
  - development affecting listed buildings and conservation areas (POLICY TP8); and

- these standards may be departed from where it can be clearly demonstrated that this is required by local circumstances.

**11.33** Where provided, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be considered to identify the non-car borne component of all trips associated with a development, so that the necessary parking requirement can then be identified. This will enable an appropriate level of parking below the maximum identified by the parking standards.

**11.34** Parking requirements for the mobility impaired are defined in the Kent Vehicle Parking Standards. It should form part of the overall parking allocation for a site but is not included in the operational parking requirements. Operational parking is defined as space for servicing, loading and unloading and other traffic which must park on the premises for reasons of security, ease of access to transport, or if the site operates when access to public transport is not available (unsociable working hours).

### **POLICY TP5**

**Vehicle parking in connection with development proposals other than those covered by POLICIES TP6, TP7 and TP8 will be restricted to the maximum necessary having regard to local highway conditions. Kent County Council's Vehicle Parking Standards, adopted by the Council, will be applied to such development proposals.**

### **Residential Development in Tunbridge Wells Central Access Zone – Parking Provision**

**11.35** PPG3 (2000) highlights that requirements for parking are a significant determinant of the amount of land required for new housing. Local authorities are advised to lower parking standards in town centre locations where services are readily accessible by walking, cycling or public transport, and for residential conversions, where off-street parking is less likely to be integrated into a scheme.

**11.36** Within the hierarchy of centres identified by this Plan, Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre is a sub-regional shopping centre with a good range of facilities, services and employment opportunities available, and with good access to a range of public transport, thus reducing the need to travel by car. Consequently, the Local Planning Authority has defined an area within a reasonable distance of the centre measured as an 800m radius from three key locations within the Primary Shopping Area – referred to as the Tunbridge Wells Central Access Zone (Residential).

**11.37** The accessibility of this area to the centre by a range of modes of transport allows parking standards for residential development in the Tunbridge Wells Central Access Zone to be lower than the Kent County Council maximum standards.

**11.38** Further exception is made for conversions to flats within the Zone. Provided no more than minor development (15 bedspaces) is proposed, no additional on-site parking will be required.

**11.39** These standards will facilitate higher density residential development within the area.

**11.40** In the case of large-scale residential development, access to the pedestrian, cycle and public transport provision should be provided or a contribution towards such provision will be sought in accordance with POLICY TP3. In addition, contributions towards the implementation of Residents' Parking Zones will be sought where no Zone is in place in order to manage any additional parking pressure placed on roads in the vicinity of the development.



**POLICY TP6**

Within the Tunbridge Wells Central Access Zone (Residential), as defined on the Proposals Map, the following parking provision will apply:

- 1 A maximum parking standard of one space per dwelling;
- 2 In the case of schemes for the conversion of existing buildings to no more than 15 bedspaces <sup>\*(1)</sup> (gross), the provision of additional on-site parking will not be required; and
- 3 In the case of larger-scale residential development, a contribution towards the implementation of Residents' Parking Zones may be sought if the need for the zone is directly related to the proposed development. Any contribution should also be fairly and reasonably related in scale to the proposed development.

**Notes:**

<sup>\*(1)</sup> Bedspaces will be calculated in the following way:

Bedrooms per Property	Bedspaces per Property
1	2
2	3
3	4
4	5
5	6
6	7

**Non-Residential Development – Parking Provision**

- 11.41 PPG13 advises that the availability of car parking has a major influence on the choice of means of transport, and may have a bearing on levels of congestion. In addition, parking takes space in commercial developments and hence reduces densities.

**Tunbridge Wells Central Parking Zone (Commercial)**

- 11.42 In view of traffic congestion in the central part of Royal Tunbridge Wells and on the main radial routes, this Local Plan seeks to limit the amount of on-site parking provided in conjunction with new commercial development. This will also maximise development potential in the town centre, where public transport and other alternative modes are readily accessible.
- 11.43 A Central Parking Zone (Commercial) has been defined for Royal Tunbridge Wells, which broadly defines the area of concentrated commercial development within, and at the edge of, the town centre. Within this Zone, proposals for all retail, food and drink, business and leisure uses will be required to provide operational parking spaces only on-site, at levels prescribed in the latest Kent County Council parking standards. Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre offers a range of on-street parking and off-street public car parks whilst provision is also made for Park and Ride facilities, to meet the needs of employees, visitors, shoppers and tourists. In addition, a range of transport options are available within this central location. The restriction of further private non-operational parking is not considered a threat to the vitality and viability of the centre.

### **POLICY TP7**

**Within the Tunbridge Wells Central Parking Zone (Commercial), as defined on the Proposals Map, operational parking only should be provided on-site for development within Use Classes A, B and D and commercial sui-generis uses.**

### **Small-Scale Changes of Use**

- 11.44** In the case of small-scale changes of use to non-residential development of under 100 square metres within the Limits to Built Development, no additional non-operational parking will be required to serve the development. This will provide for flexibility between uses in respect of minor development, particularly within Primary Shopping Areas and Neighbourhood and Village Centres. Such exemptions will not apply in the rural area outside the Limits to Built Development given the reliance on the car in such locations.

### **Development Affecting Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas**

- 11.45** There are sound conservation reasons which occasionally make it impossible and undesirable to meet standard parking requirements on-site. It is not intended that, on constrained sites, the lack of sufficient off-street car parking and loading and unloading facilities should preclude the conversion of a listed building, or building important to the character of a conservation area. In such cases contributions will be sought towards improving provision of alternative forms of access such as footways, cycleways and Park and Ride.

### **POLICY TP8**

**Within the Limits to Built Development, as defined on the Proposals Map, the provision of additional non-operational parking will not be required in the following instances:**

- a) Changes of use to non-residential uses involving gross floorspace of no more than 100 square metres;**
- b) Proposals essential to the successful restoration, refurbishment or re-use of buildings of architectural or historic interest or buildings which make a significant contribution to the character of a conservation area; or**
- c) Proposals essential to the successful integration of a development scheme within a conservation area.**

**In all cases operational parking for non-residential development should be provided on-site where feasible.**

### **Cycle Parking**

- 11.46** The provision of cycle parking facilities should be incorporated into new developments. The provision of convenient and secure cycle parking and storage facilities should be made at shopping, community facilities and transport nodes, as advocated in PPG13.

- 11.47** Cycle parking standards for new non-residential development are set out in Kent County Council's Cycling Strategy for Kent, and these standards will be applied to new development. Additionally, given the limited availability for cycle storage, cycle parking should be provided for new-build residential development without private curtilage, such as flats. Communal cycle parking facilities to serve the residential development is envisaged.

#### **POLICY TP9**

**Within the Plan area, the cycle parking standards for non-residential development set out in the latest Kent County Council's Cycling Strategy for Kent will be applied.**

**Cycle parking will be required to serve new-build residential development without private curtilage at a standard of one space per dwelling unit.**

## **Strategic Transport Proposals**

### **THE A21 TRUNK ROAD**

- 11.48** The A21 provides a vital trunk road link between London and Hastings. Improvements have already been made to some sections of the A21, for example Pembury to Kippings Cross. However, remaining single-carriageway sections within the Borough continue to suffer from poor alignment and visibility resulting in delays and accidents. There are proposals to make further improvements to the A21 during this Plan period.

#### **A21: Tonbridge to Pembury Bypass**

- 11.49** The Kent Local Transport Plan promotes the A21 Tonbridge Bypass to Pembury Bypass scheme in order to resolve the congestion and accident problems in the Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells areas, but also to significantly improve the accessibility of the Hastings and Bexhill area from the M25/London direction.
- 11.50** A Public Inquiry into the re-alignment and dualling of this section of the A21 was conducted in the spring of 1993, and confirmed the alignment shown on the Proposals Map.
- 11.51** The Highways Agency's preferred alignment of the proposed three-lane dual carriageway lies to the west of the current line of the A21, from the Somerhill Park Intersection (Vauxhall Lane) to a new grade separated junction of the A21 and Longfield Road.
- 11.52** However, in 1998 the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions announced that the approved scheme be remitted to the Access to Hastings Multi-Modal Study. The primary objective of this study was to develop a sustainable and integrated strategy for access to and within the Bexhill and Hastings area. In addition to this, the study considered the safety and congestion problems in the Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells area.
- 11.53** The recommendation made by the study in order to achieve these objectives cover a range of modes, including rail which is covered in the Rail Services section below.
- 11.54** In terms of highway schemes, The Access to Hastings Multi-Modal Study recommends that there is an online widening of the A21 between the Tonbridge Bypass and the

Pembury Bypass to dual two-lane standard. This proposal is now included in the Regional Transport Strategy (July 2004).

- 11.55** The Highways Agency published a new preferred route following broadly the line of the existing A21 in July 2003. However, this is still subject to final detailed design proposals and the publication of the necessary statutory orders and any public inquiry which may be held in accordance with procedures under the 1980 Highways Act. A revocation order will also be needed for the offline route approved in 1993. The Highways Agency anticipates publication of these orders during late 2006. Following any consequential public inquiry, a construction programme for the route is to be determined through a prioritisation process to be undertaken by SEERA. Work will not start on site prior to 2008.
- 11.56** Both of the currently published routes are included in POLICY TP10 and on the Proposals Map, as advised by PPG12 and PPS12 (and are required to be safeguarded from other development in accordance with Article 15 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995. However, the Highways Agency has not yet finalised their final detailed design and the alignment has not yet been confirmed by revocation of the formerly approved route. The more recent "on-line" scheme was the subject of a Highways Agency publicity exercise during autumn 2002 and is reported in the Ministerial Statement (July 2003) announcing the decision on the preferred on-line route. However, the local planning and highway authorities are not committed to support any detailed designs that have yet to be published. An Environmental Impact Assessment should involve a full scoping and consultation process in advance of an EIA being submitted and will need to take full account of the landscape, built heritage and ecological significance of the area. The needs of local access, Public Rights of Way, pedestrians and other non-motorised road users all need to be taken into account as well as minimising environmental impact.
- 11.57** Subject to further consultation and finalisation of the Tonbridge to Pembury A21 improvements scheme under the auspices of the 1980 Highways Act, the resulting scheme will be incorporated into the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Framework.

### **POLICY TP10**

**The Highways Agency proposes to upgrade the A21 between Tonbridge Bypass and Pembury Bypass, through one of the schemes defined on the Proposals Map. The Local Planning Authority will safeguard both of these alignments by refusing proposals which would compromise the implementation of either scheme. Following confirmation of the preferred scheme, the Local Planning Authority will safeguard the preferred alignment by refusing any proposals which would compromise the implementation of the scheme.**

### **A21: Other Improvements**

- 11.62** The Access to Hastings Multi-Modal Study (referred to above) advised that the A21 between Pembury and Hastings should be the subject of further feasibility studies due to the importance of the road in providing strategic access to Hastings and existing road safety issues.
- 11.63** In May 2004 the Highways Agency announced the Preferred Route for the A21 Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Bypass. This follows the line shown on the Proposals Map and will be to dual carriageway standard from the Kippings Cross roundabout to link up with the Lamberhurst Bypass at its junction with the A262. Further design work will be carried out before draft orders are published under the 1980 Highways Act and an

Environmental Impact Assessment produced. The Highways Agency timetable for publication of these is late 2006. These will be open to objection and possibly a public inquiry. Construction is anticipated 2009-2010.

- 11.64** In accordance with Article 15 of the General Development Procedure Order 1995, this route will be safeguarded from other development. However, the Highways Agency have not yet finalised their design and the Local Planning Authority are not committed to supporting the detail of any scheme which has yet to be published. Any Environmental Impact Assessment should involve a full scoping and consultation process in advance of an EIA being submitted and needs to take account of the landscape, built heritage and ecological significance of the area. The scheme is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the needs of local access, Public Rights of Way, pedestrians and other non-motorised road users all need to be taken into account, as well as minimising environmental impact.
- 11.65** Subject to further consultation and finalisation of the Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst A21 improvements scheme under the auspices of the 1980 Highways Act, the resulting scheme will be incorporated into the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Development Framework.

#### **POLICY TP11**

**The Highways Agency proposes to construct an upgrade of the A21 from Kippings Cross to Lamberhurst Bypass, as defined on the Proposals Map, and the Local Planning Authority will safeguard the preferred alignment by refusing proposals for development which would compromise the implementation of the proposed scheme.**

#### **A228 – COLTS HILL STRATEGIC LINK**

- 11.66** The Kent Local Transport Plan identifies the A228 as a key strategic corridor linking major settlements from Medway, through the Medway Valley, and on to Royal Tunbridge Wells. The 'Colts Hill Strategic Link' is the last section of the A228 between the A26 and the A21 to be improved and would allow the A228 to replace the A26 as the primary route in the area. Locally the A228 links Paddock Wood with the A21 and Royal Tunbridge Wells.
- 11.67** In 1991 an off-line two-lane dual carriageway scheme was taken to public consultation, a scheme was approved by Kent County Council as Highway Authority, and subsequently discussed extensively during the Tunbridge Wells adopted Local Plan (1996) Public Inquiry. The Inspector questioned the need for a dual carriageway and considered that a single carriageway option should be examined.
- 11.68** In June 1995 Kent County Council published an appraisal of a single carriageway option. Further to this, Kent County Council carried out a Fundamental Review of the Transport Capital Programme in 1997 and abandoned the dual carriageway scheme in favour of a single carriageway scheme with crawler lanes and overtaking lanes.
- 11.69** The benefits of the scheme include reduced travel costs, improved safety and the removal of traffic from the frontage of some 55 houses (reducing the visual and noise intrusion effects of traffic on these properties). It would also assist in the reduction of traffic on the A26 and its impacts on the village of Hadlow and parts of Tonbridge.
- 11.70** The single carriageway option was formally approved by Kent County Council without prior consultation, since the route closely followed the previous dual carriageway alignment which had been subject to considerable analysis, public consultation and

examined as part of the preparation of the adopted Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (1996).

- 11.71** The alignment of the approved single carriageway scheme is shown on the Proposals Map. This scheme was adopted in May 2003 and a bid for Government funding for the scheme was made through the Local Transport Plan in July 2003. Although funding was not allocated, the bid was not rejected. A further bid was made in July 2004, which is recognised by GOSE as providing traffic and safety benefits along a heavily trafficked section of the A228 but which did not present a sufficient priority for approval at that stage.
- 11.72** The scheme adopted in May 2003 has been included in the submission of the Provisional Local Transport Plan for Kent, 2006-2011. A provisional financial settlement should be known by late 2005. Subject to funding, it is anticipated that a planning application could be submitted in mid-2006. Subject to completion of statutory processes and allocation of funding, construction could, at the earliest, commence in 2008/09.
- 11.73** In designing the Strategic Link, the needs of local access, Public Rights of Way, pedestrians and other non-motorised road users will need to be taken into account. If, in the detailed designing of the scheme, the safeguarded route is inadequate to allow Kent County Council to make minor modifications to the alignment, this issue will be considered as part of a planning application for the route, or as part of a Development Plan Document.

### **POLICY TP12**

**The Local Highway Authority proposes to realign the A228 at Colts Hill, as defined on the Proposals Map, and the Local Planning Authority will safeguard the preferred alignment by refusing proposals for development which would compromise the implementation of the proposed scheme.**

### **RAIL SERVICES**

- 11.74** Whilst the rail system provides the opportunity to make local journeys, the main market for train operating companies is the London commuter, and consequently services have developed accordingly.
- 11.75** Within the Plan area there are four stations which provide commuter services:
- Tunbridge Wells Central (London Charing Cross-Hastings line);
  - High Brooms, Southborough (London Charing Cross-Hastings line);
  - Paddock Wood (London Charing Cross-Ashford line; Paddock Wood-Maidstone line); and
  - Ashurst (London Victoria-Uckfield line).
- 11.76** The slower and less frequent London to Uckfield service which serves settlements to the south and west of Royal Tunbridge Wells, principally beyond the Plan area, leads to a high demand for the better services provided from Tunbridge Wells Central and High

Brooms stations. This adds to the traffic within the town and demand for long-stay parking in Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre and in the vicinity of High Brooms railway station. However, as part of the new 20-year franchise agreement for the South Central area the train operating company, GoVia, have committed themselves to providing through electric trains between London and Uckfield. These improved services are expected to be operating by 2004 and may have the effect of reducing demand for services at Tunbridge Wells Central and High Brooms stations.

- 11.77** The other main rail service enhancement currently planned is the introduction of Thameslink 2000 services. This service enhancement will incorporate Tonbridge and Paddock Wood stations into the Thameslink 2000 network by operating services on the Ashford line. Furthermore, the improvements will provide direct services to new London destinations, new London interchanges and stations to the north of London.
- 11.78** The Access to Hastings Multi-Modal Study, in considering north-south transport movements in the vicinity of Royal Tunbridge Wells, recommends an enhanced local rail service between Wadhurst and Tonbridge, either as a shuttle service or as an extension of the (Horsham) Gatwick-Tonbridge/Tunbridge Wells service. These proposals would significantly enhance local rail access to Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre from both the north and south.

#### **Tunbridge Wells Central to Eridge Railway Line**

- ~~**11.79** Retaining the option to fully reinstate the Tunbridge Wells Central to Eridge railway line provides the opportunity to link the London to Uckfield railway line with the London to Hastings railway line. Part of the line is currently used to provide a heritage railway, known as the Spa Valley Line, from historic rail sheds near Tunbridge Wells West station to Groombridge with a halt at the tourist attraction, High Rocks.~~
- ~~**11.80** On a local level, the re-opening of this rail corridor to commercial services would provide the opportunity for rail access from the south to Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre for work and shopping trips. Additionally, services on this rail corridor may reduce the demand for long-stay commuter parking in the vicinity of Tunbridge Wells Central railway station by rail commuters travelling from the south.~~
- ~~**11.81** The re-introduction of commercial services on this route could potentially contribute to the strengthening of the region's strategic rail network. Full reinstatement of the Tunbridge Wells Central to Eridge railway line, together with the reinstatement of the Uckfield to Lewes railway line, would provide an alternative route from London to the south coast, therefore contributing to alleviating pressure on the existing services operating to destinations on the south coast.~~
- ~~**11.82** The full reinstatement of this railway line would impact significantly on the existing development surrounding Tunbridge Wells West station, particularly in relation to parking and highway access. These issues would need to be addressed in the early stages of implementation. Clearly the scale of any impact in this location or potentially in other locations adjoining the line would be dependent on the role and function of a re-opened line within the rail network and the consequent scale of infrastructure required.~~
- ~~**11.83** The immediate prospects of commercial services on the link are limited. However, PPG12 and PPS13 advise local authorities to consider the potential of disused trackbeds and routes for possible future transport schemes, including rail. This route will continue to be safeguarded through the Plan period. The section of safeguarded route around The Grove junction has been provisionally identified by the Strategic Rail Authority for the provision of a rail turn-back facility within their medium term plan. Although there is no finalised programme for this investment it is anticipated that the incumbent Train Operating Company on the new Integrated Kent Franchise will be keen to pursue its provision. Local pressure continues for the reintroduction of the Tunbridge Wells to Eridge through-route. A detailed investigation of the reinstatement of this line~~

~~and the likely programme for such a reinstatement will be considered as part of a Development Plan Document.~~

- ~~11.84 The East Sussex and Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 and the Wealden Local Plan both safeguard the lengths of this route, which are outside the Borough.~~

### **POLICY TP13**

~~The Local Planning Authority will safeguard the Tunbridge Wells Central to Eridge railway line, as defined on the Proposals Map, by refusing proposals that would compromise the re-opening of the rail line.~~

### **Paddock Wood Railway Station**

- ~~11.85 Services to London Charing Cross station operate from Paddock Wood railway station. Consequently rail commuters are attracted to the town and considerable pressure is placed on the existing parking facilities in the centre. On-Street Parking Surveys: Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre, Paddock Wood, Cranbrook and Hawkhurst, 1999: Babbie Group, have revealed that some of the on-street parking that occurs in residential streets around the centre of the town is by rail commuters.~~

- ~~11.86 It is anticipated that with the completion of the Thameslink 2000 project, and the introduction of improved services, the patronage of rail services from Paddock Wood station will increase and the demand for commuter parking will increase.~~

- ~~11.87 An opportunity exists to provide additional commuter car parking to the south of Paddock Wood railway station adjacent to existing provision. Approximately 55 additional spaces could be provided, making a total provision of 315 spaces. This would contribute to alleviating the pressure placed on on-street parking, assist modal shift to the train by commuters, and complement recent traffic management and environmental improvements designed to enhance the attractiveness of the town centre by relieving pressure on on-street car parking.~~

### **POLICY TP14**

~~Land is allocated for an extension to the car park north of Station Road, adjoining Paddock Wood railway station, as defined on the Proposals Map.~~

- ~~11.88 In order to increase the attractiveness of bus services to Paddock Wood railway station, land is reserved for the provision of improved bus interchange facilities. A scheme has been developed by the Borough Council, in partnership with the Highway Authority and the then rail franchisee Connex South-East, and it is anticipated that the scheme will be implemented within the Plan period.~~

### **POLICY TP15**

~~Land is allocated for improved bus/rail interchange facilities at Paddock Wood railway station, as defined on the Proposals Map.~~



### **Ashurst Railway Station**

~~11.89~~ As part of the franchise agreement for the South Central area the train operating company, GoVia, are committed to improving services on the Uckfield to London railway line. These new services have the potential to absorb some of the existing high demand for the Tunbridge Wells-London line. Additional station parking will assist modal shift in favour of the train and, more locally, help reduce the number and length of some car journeys into High Brooms and Tunbridge Wells Central Stations to access that line. In the light of these planned improvements to services from Ashurst station, it is consistent with Plan objectives to reserve land for additional car parking at this location in order to cater for the increased demand.

#### **POLICY TP16**

~~Land is allocated for an extension to the car park on land adjoining Ashurst railway station, as defined on the Proposals Map, and in Appendix 7.~~

## **Royal Tunbridge Wells – Transport and Parking Provision**

### **TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

**11.90** The transport and parking strategy for Royal Tunbridge Wells aims to maintain accessibility by car into Royal Tunbridge Wells in peak periods whilst improving travelling conditions for bus users, pedestrians and cyclists.

**11.91** Key proposals set out in the Borough Transport Strategy include:

- park and ride proposals, and complementary management of town centre long-stay parking provision;
- bus priority measures on the radial routes;
- a comprehensive cycle network, segregated, where feasible, serving and linking the town centre, the Longfield Road area and High Brooms railway station, including cycle priority measures;
- new and improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities;
- improved rail and bus provision from the south; and
- traffic management measures within residential areas, including Home Zones and local School Safety Zones and HGV management.

**11.92** The full range of proposals are shown on the Illustrative Maps of Transport Proposals (within the Borough Transport Strategy) for Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough and Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre.

### **PARK AND RIDE**

**11.93** In the case of Royal Tunbridge Wells, there is particular concern about:

- the volume of traffic and its forecast growth;
- peak hour congestion and delays;
- the impact of traffic on the local environment; and
- limited parking opportunities (particularly for visitors).

- 11.94** A number of historic towns facing similar problems have sought to manage car parking demand by implementing Park and Ride schemes. These normally involve the provision of surface level car parks on the periphery of the town and a quality bus service to the centre (involving bus priority).
- 11.95** Park and Ride provides an opportunity to intercept traffic on main/congested radial roads and encourages travellers to complete their journeys by bus. This allows reductions in the level of traffic on the main routes and in the centre of town, with consequent potential for environmental improvements or using existing highway land for other priorities such as buses and cycles. Recent guidance provided by the English Historic Towns Forum (EHTF), 'Bus-based Park and Ride – A Good Practice Guide' (2000) indicates that these sorts of scheme can, as a minimum, stabilise the volume of traffic using radial routes and the town centre.
- 11.96** In summary, Park and Ride could:
- stabilise and possibly reduce levels of traffic congestion;
  - reduce delays for workers, shoppers and visitors travelling to the centre;
  - improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians;
  - release more town centre parking for short-stay visitors;
  - release on-street parking space for residents' parking schemes; and
  - help to preserve the character of the town.
- 11.97** The benefits of Park and Ride in Royal Tunbridge Wells are likely to be significant. It is the Local Planning Authority's strategy to manage demand and promote alternatives to the car. One of the key components is the provision of a Park and Ride system to serve the Royal Tunbridge Wells area.

### **Park and Ride Demand Criteria**

- 11.98** There are four primary criteria for assessing the potential success of a Park and Ride proposal:
- (i) There must be existing parking difficulties in the town centre**  
In Royal Tunbridge Wells, the occupancy rates for off-street car parks (both short and long-stay) are approximately 90%, which represent effective full capacity, and are projected to increase further over the Plan period.
- (ii) Park and Ride must be quicker than the alternative options.**  
Park and Ride must provide travellers with the opportunity to get to their destinations more quickly than by using their car.

The bus service must be reliable, frequent (about once every 10 minutes), quick and routed to ensure that patrons are dropped very close to their destinations. It is essential that buses are provided with priority where possible. The Borough Transport Strategy gives consideration to opportunities for providing bus lanes and priority measures, wherever practical and desirable, on key sections of routes into the town centre.

Perceived time savings achieved by the use of bus lanes coupled with perceived delays associated with traffic congestion, combined with problems of accessing a multi-storey car park and the time taken to find a space, should ensure patronage of the Park and Ride services.

**(iii) There must be sufficient potential demand**

The Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy – Technical Notes, (2000/2001) indicate that a daily demand for Park and Ride of at least 650 vehicles can be achieved on the town's principal radial routes.

**(iv) Park and Ride must be cheaper than the alternative options**

A price differential would need to operate between long-stay town centre car parking and the use of Park and Ride. The tariff for short-term car parking can remain relatively low, thereby encouraging shoppers, business visitors and tourists to use the town. The pricing of the Park and Ride services should also take into account the cost of scheduled bus services in the local area.

**Selecting the Sites for Park and Ride Car Parks**

**11.99** Recent guidance provided by the English Historic Towns Forum (EHTF), 'Bus-based Park and Ride – A Good Practice Guide' (2000) lists eight factors which should be considered in site selection:

- well-signed;
- close to a major radial route;
- preferably on the edge of the built up area;
- ideally located before congestion begins;
- provided with safe and easy access;
- sufficient space for expansion;
- located to minimise impact on conventional bus services; and
- in keeping with surrounding land uses.

**11.100** Since Park and Ride involves establishing a differential between the cost of using Park and Ride and the costs of using the town centre car parks, it is preferable to provide a Park and Ride scheme on (or accessible from) all main radials, since those using routes without a service would be obliged to pay a higher premium for a car parking space in the town centre.

**11.101** No Park and Ride sites are proposed to the south of the town, either along the A26 or A267. There are particularly limited opportunities for the provision of sites along these routes within the Borough boundary. However, as highlighted in paragraph 11.78 above, proposals exist for an enhanced local rail service between Wadhurst and Tonbridge, serving Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre. In addition, the Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2003) proposes a peak hour express bus service, as an integrated part of the overall service on the route, between Crowborough and Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre. In combination, these proposals would improve public transport access to the town centre from the south, thus reducing the need for Park and Ride provision.

**11.102** The Borough Council considered alternative sites along the radial route corridors within the built up area, on the basis that, although they may not meet the EHTF criteria, they may be less constrained by Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and High Weald Special Landscape Area policies.

**11.103** In the event, sites of sufficient size in the radial route corridors closer to the town centre are scarce and generally no less constrained than the allocated sites:

- most have Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and/or High Weald Special Landscape Area constraints;
- many are on ridgelines or skylines and would be highly visible;

## 11 Transport and Parking

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- some are further constrained by being on common land, within conservation areas, areas of nature conservation or landscape importance, landscape approaches, recreational land, important open space or areas affected by Tree Preservation Orders;
- development of many of the sites would have a significant adverse impact on residential amenity; and
- none have the traffic benefits of the allocated sites which are at the Limits to Built Development of Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough, and bring maximum benefit to the radial routes.

**11.104** In the case of the Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough area this necessarily focuses the search for sites for Park and Ride car parks on the Green Belt, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and High Weald Special Landscape Area.

**11.105** Whilst Green Belt policy includes a presumption against most forms of development, Park and Ride car parks represent a land use which is not 'footloose', which must be located at the edge of the built up area of the town and must adjoin a radial route. Specific tests for the development of Park and Ride sites within the Green Belt must be met. No sites are allocated within the Green Belt in this Local Plan.

**11.106** Furthermore, in choosing sites for Park and Ride car parks one of the prime considerations has been to minimise the impact on the countryside, the character and setting of the settlements which the sites adjoin and residential amenity.

**11.107** Similarly, specific tests must be met when siting major development in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and no allocations are made within the designated area in this Local Plan.

**11.108** It is also desirable for the facility to be located to allow a right turn in and left turn out manoeuvre for most of the traffic using a Park and Ride site, since this provides convenient access and easy egress, and involves the least disruption to other traffic using the radial route.

### **The Pembury Road Park and Ride**

~~**11.109** Pembury Road is one of the prime routes into the town, and land is allocated for a Park and Ride car park at Woodsgate Corner, Pembury. The site is well-screened from the road, and the height of the site and vegetation to the south of the A21 help to hide the car park from potential long views from open countryside to the south. However, careful on-site landscaping, comprising mounding and planting, designed to reflect the character and appearance of the landscape of the area when seen from the public viewpoints from the south, will still be needed to minimise the impact of development on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.~~

~~**11.110** The location and character of the Woodsgate Corner site mean that its development for Park and Ride will have a limited impact on the perceived Green Belt gap between Pembury and Royal Tunbridge Wells.~~

~~**11.111** The allocated site meets the EHTF criteria whilst minimising the potential impact of the scheme, notably on the Green Belt and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In particular, provision has been made for substantial landforming and landscaping along the southern boundary of the Woodsgate Corner site to screen Park and Ride and other development from views from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.~~

~~**11.112** The site allocated for Park and Ride lies immediately adjacent to the built up area of Pembury, and is excluded from the Green Belt.~~

~~**11.113** Access will be provided directly from the roundabout which links the A21 and the A264, and serves the retail supermarket on the adjoining site. The planning permission for~~

~~Park and Ride from this site has already been granted and part of the car parking completed in conjunction with the supermarket.~~

- ~~11.114 Estimated demand and the environmental context indicate that the facilities on Pembury Road should have a sizeable capacity, but further work is necessary to determine in detail the number of spaces required.~~

#### **Home Farm, south of Longfield Road Park and Ride**

- ~~11.115 Longfield Road in the north east of Royal Tunbridge Wells is not a designated radial route to Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre. However, The Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy – Technical Notes (2000/2001) indicate that Longfield Road is used by significant levels of through traffic, given the access provided to the A21.~~

- ~~11.116 Provision of a Park and Ride facility on the allocated site south of Longfield Road is dependent upon the dualling of the A21 between the Tonbridge and Pembury Bypasses and a major improvement of the A21/Longfield Road roundabout, to resolve existing congestion at the junction and hence access to the Longfield Road area. Improvement of the A21/Longfield Road junction should come forward as part of a scheme for dualling the A21 between the Tonbridge and Pembury Bypasses.~~

- ~~11.117 The allocated site lies to the south of Longfield Road outside the Limits to Built Development for Royal Tunbridge Wells, on land previously designated as Rural Fringe. The site is low lying, situated to the north west of a highly visible north-south running ridge which is particularly important to the character and setting of this part of the town. In addition, existing woodland to the north west of the site, adjoining Home Farm Lane, will screen the site from long distance views from High Brooms, Southborough and the railway line. Careful landscaping of the site will be needed to minimise the potential impact of the scheme on the landscape quality of the area.~~

- ~~11.118 Vehicular access to the site would be via an extension of Knights Way which serves the Knights Park leisure complex. Bus services into Tunbridge Wells from the facility would utilise the highway measures to reduce bus travel time and improve journey reliability, as identified in the Borough Transport Strategy.~~

- ~~11.119 Estimated demand and the environmental context indicate that the facilities south of Longfield Road should have a capacity of 400 spaces.~~

#### **Other Sites**

- ~~11.110 Two other sites were identified in the adopted Local Plan (1996). These require reappraisal as part of a Development Plan Document.~~

#### **POLICY TP17**

**Land is allocated for a Park and Ride car park at Woodsgate Corner (Pembury) and Home Farm (south of Longfield Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells) as defined on the Proposals Map.**

**Particular attention must be paid to minimising the impact of the development on the landscape and to meeting the following requirements:**

- 1 A comprehensive scheme of landscape planting must be provided to screen new development. This will include native tree and shrub boundaries incorporating existing hedgerows; and**
- 2 New structures, lighting and signage should be minimised.**

### CYCLE PROVISION

- 11.120** A continuous network of cycle routes is proposed within Royal Tunbridge Wells, comprising both mandatory and advisory routes. The network is detailed in the Borough Transport Strategy and provides for segregated cycle routes, where feasible. The network will be developed over time as priorities and opportunities allow, enhancing the attractiveness of cycling for utility trips in the urban area in particular. Key destinations to be served by the cycle route network include: Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre, the Longfield Road area, High Brooms railway station, leisure and recreation sites and a number of secondary schools. Segregated cycle facilities follow the A264 (east) and A26 (north) corridors into the central area, whereas, because of limited road widths and ensuing safety issues, alternatives to the main road routes are proposed for routes into the central area from the residential areas of Langton Green, Rusthall and Ramslye.
- 11.121** The majority of the cycle network can be achieved within the existing highway carriageway. However, additional land is likely to be required to achieve sections of the network, and POLICY TP18 identifies land accordingly. For routes identified in POLICY TP18(a), (b) and (d), some of which pass through Local Plan allocations in some instances, only the access and egress points are shown on the Proposals Map. The route alignment between these points should follow the desire lines for cyclists and pedestrians (but segregated) as far as possible, but consistent with the best overall planning of the allocated development.

#### **POLICY TP18**

**The Local Planning Authority and Local Highway Authority will promote and provide a continuous network of cycle routes within Royal Tunbridge Wells. The proposed network includes the following parts of routes defined on the Proposals Map which will require land outside of the existing public highway:**

- (a) Goods Station Road to Sandhurst Road/Sandhurst Park, via Grosvenor and Hilbert Recreation Grounds;**
- (b) Barnetts Wood (Southborough) to Dowding Way;**
- (c) Woodside Road, Rusthall to Coniston Avenue, Culverden Down;**
- (d) Ropers Gate, Ramslye to Linden Park Road/Old West Station area;**
- (e) Lamberts Road to Knights Way, Knights Park, via Home Farm Lane; and**
- (f) St John's Road to Tunbridge Wells Sports Centre.**

**Proposals for development which would compromise the construction of the schemes will be refused.**

### TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

#### **Main Transport Routes**

- 11.122** The proposals of the Borough Transport Strategy that affect the main transport routes into the urban area have been subject to engineering assessments. Most of the improvements are to be achieved within existing public highway land, but in some instances the achievement of bus facilities, cycle and pedestrian provision or off-carriageway parking/loading and consequent realignment of the carriageway, will require additional land for highways purposes. Generally, these requirements are too

small to be clearly shown on the Proposals Map and therefore more detailed maps are provided in the Appendices to the Plan.

#### **POLICY TP19**

**The Local Planning Authority and Local Highway Authority will promote and undertake highway improvements to achieve the objectives of the Borough Transport Strategy. The following improvements are defined on the Proposals Map and in Appendices 8 to 12:**

- a) **A26 London Road, Southborough, loading and short stay parking bays and cycle/pedestrian crossing facilities (Appendix 8);**
- b) **A26 between John Street and Culverden Park, south bound Bus Priority measures (Appendix 9);**
- c) **A26 London Road/Vale Road junction improvements (Appendix 10);**
- d) **A264 Langton Road/Coach Road junction improvements (Appendix 11); and**
- e) **A264 Langton Road loading and short stay parking bays (Appendix 12).**

**Proposals for development which would compromise the construction of the schemes will be refused.**

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES**

**11.123** Eleven Neighbourhood Centres are identified within Royal Tunbridge Wells, as defined on the Proposals Map under POLICY CR13. Only two of these Neighbourhood Centres are served by existing off-street car parks. In particular, the St John's Neighbourhood Centre is served by the John Street car park, hence reducing the incidence of on-street parking on the congested A26. POLICY TP20 seeks to protect this existing provision accordingly.

**11.124** These centres seek to provide a range of local facilities within the urban area which are primarily accessible to local residents by foot or cycle. On-street parking is typically available in the vicinity of these centres. No further parking provision is made to serve these centres.

#### **POLICY TP20**

**The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the following sites, as defined on the Proposals Map, for public car parking unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided:**

- **High Brooms Road, High Brooms, Royal Tunbridge Wells; and**
- **John Street, Royal Tunbridge Wells.**

### Southborough – Transport and Parking Provision

#### TRANSPORT STRATEGY

**11.125** The transport and parking strategy for Southborough aims to improve transport access to the centre and ameliorate the negative effects of traffic in the shopping area. A key component of the strategy is to provide a suitable pedestrian environment, whilst providing sufficient traffic capacity to provide reliable conditions for traffic flow through the town.

**11.126** Key proposals set out in the Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2003) include:

- improved pedestrian crossings and widened pedestrian footpaths within the centre;
- prohibition of all loading and parking on London Road and suitable provision on side streets or within dedicated bays on London Road;
- traffic management measures and a re-allocation of roadspace on London Road to maintain low vehicle speeds;
- improved bus services through greater timetable reliability, resulting from the removal of constraints on traffic flow on London Road and bus priority measures, and complemented by improved bus stop infrastructure;
- improved cycle access to Southborough town centre; and
- further studies of the A26.

**11.127** The full range of proposals are shown on the Illustrative Map of Transport Proposals (within the Borough Transport Strategy) for Royal Tunbridge Wells and Southborough.

#### CYCLE PROVISION

~~**11.128** A cycle route is proposed between the Barnetts Wood residential area and Southborough town centre, to provide cycle access to services and facilities. The full route is shown on the Illustrative Map of the Borough Transport Strategy. The majority of the route can be achieved within the highway carriageway, but the development site (POLICY CR6) will need to be traversed to enable the provision of the western section of the route. The access points onto the site for the cycle route are indicated on the Proposals Map and the route should serve the supermarket, school and children's play area within the site. The route alignment should follow the desire lines for cyclists and pedestrians (but segregated) as far as possible but consistent with the best overall planning of the redevelopment site to achieve Plan objectives. Layout should include the capability for possible development of a spur northwards from the main cycle route to a third access/egress point to the north of the recreational grounds.~~

#### ~~POLICY TP21~~

~~The Local Highway Authority proposes to provide a segregated cycle route across the Ridgeways, Southborough, between the points defined on the Proposals Map, as part of a continuous route between Barnetts Wood and Southborough town centre.~~

#### PARKING PROPOSALS

**11.129** Within Southborough there has been a long-established need for additional parking facilities to serve the town centre. Current levels of public car parking provision are



inadequate to meet demand arising from the existing and proposed uses within the centre.

- 11.130** Existing demand for parking in Southborough town centre is provided for through the provision of 66 car parking spaces at the Yew Tree Road Car Park. These are used primarily for short-stay parking. Approximately 20 spaces will be lost from this car park with the requirement to provide service access to the new retail and residential development through the site.

#### **POLICY TP22**

**The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the Yew Tree Road, Southborough public car park, as defined on the Proposals Map, unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided.**

- ~~**11.131** In order to address the inadequacy of current provision, it is proposed that additional parking will be provided on the redevelopment site allocated for mixed use development, including a retail supermarket and improved community facilities at the Royal Victoria Hall, under POLICY CR6. A new primary school and recreation facilities are also proposed. No more than 150 parking spaces should be provided and thus a total off-street car parking provision of some 200 spaces will serve the centre of Southborough. Proposals of the Borough Transport Strategy and POLICY TP19 above provide improved crossing facilities over London Road and off-carriageway servicing for local shops.~~

#### **NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES**

- 11.132** The only Neighbourhood Centre within Southborough, as defined on the Proposals Map under POLICY CR13, is complemented by public car parking facilities at Pennington Road. Notwithstanding the opportunity for local residents to access the local centres available by foot or cycle, the retention of the parking facility is sought, given its role in reducing the incidence of on-street parking on the congested A26.

#### **POLICY TP23**

**The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the Pennington Road, Southborough public car park, as defined on the Proposals Map, unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided.**

### **Paddock Wood – Parking Provision**

- 11.133** Paddock Wood town centre is served by two public car parks which are located off Commercial Road with an approximate total number of spaces of 120, as shown in Table 8 below.

**Table 8: Public Car Parks – Paddock Wood**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Spaces</b>
Commercial Road (west)	55
Commercial Road (east)	65
<b>Total Spaces</b>	<b>120</b>

- 11.134** Separate provision of 176 spaces is made specifically to serve the retail supermarket to the north of Church Road. This level of parking provision is considered sufficient to serve the centre over the Plan period and whilst no further provision for public car parking is made in the Plan, it is important that current provision is retained.
- 11.135** Considerable pressure is placed on the town centre car parking provision and on-street parking in the centre by rail commuters using Paddock Wood railway station. ~~An opportunity exists to make additional provision to serve the railway station and land is allocated under POLICY TP14.~~

### **POLICY TP24**

**The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the Commercial Road (east and west), Paddock Wood public car parks, as defined on the Proposals Map, unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided.**

## **Cranbrook – Parking Provision**

- 11.136** In addition to on-street car parking spaces, provision is made for public car parking in three off-street car parks, totalling 472 spaces, as shown in Table 9 below.

**Table 9: Public Car Parks – Cranbrook**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Spaces</b>
High Street	331
St David's Bridge (Tanyard)	100
Jockey Lane	41
<b>Total Spaces</b>	<b>472</b>

- 11.137** The car parks located at The Tanyard/St David's Bridge and The High Street primarily function to serve the whole town centre and to support its mix of uses. However, the Jockey Lane car park, off Carriers Road, primarily functions to meet the demand for parking facilities created by nearby healthcare, library and school facilities.
- 11.138** The proximity of the High Street car park to the retail food supermarket and the High Street shops make this a popular, well-used car park. Often usage of this car park is close to capacity, particularly during much of the shop trading times. It is important for the vitality and viability of this rural centre that such parking provision is retained.

### **POLICY TP25**

**The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the High Street, Jockey Lane and Tanyard/St David's Bridge, Cranbrook public car parks unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided.**

## Hawkhurst – Parking Provision

11.139 Three public car parks serve the centre of Hawkhurst with a total capacity of 185 spaces as shown in Table 10 below.

**Table 10: Public Car Parks – Hawkhurst**

Location	Spaces
Rye Road (All Saints)	79
Rye Road (Fowlers Park)	72
North Grove Road	34
<b>Total Spaces</b>	<b>185</b>

11.140 The Hawkhurst Off-street Parking Survey revealed that at the present time the public car parks to the south of Rye Road (All Saints) and at North Grove Road are primarily used for short-stay parking. The car park at Fowlers Park is available for long-stay parking.

11.141 In order to protect the vitality and viability of the rural centre of Hawkhurst, the Local Planning Authority wishes to retain existing car parking provision unless suitable alternatives are provided.

### POLICY TP26

The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the Rye Road (All Saints), Rye Road (Fowlers Park) and North Grove Road, Hawkhurst public car parks, as defined on the Proposals Map, unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided.

## Rural Transport and Parking Provision

### TRANSPORT STRATEGY

11.142 Traffic in the rural area is growing with a resulting increase in traffic problems. Particular concerns include: the lack of public transport and access to services and opportunities; the number of heavy goods vehicles in villages and on minor rural roads; increasing vehicle speeds and the conflicts with vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, equestrians and other recreational road users. The “rural” character of many roads has been eroded by unsympathetically designed highway infrastructure and signing. However, the circumstances of some rural areas mean the car is likely to remain the key form of transport.

11.143 The transport and parking strategy for the rural communities aims to provide adequate access to services and facilities whether they have access to a car or not, at the more accessible rural towns and villages. Generally development is directed away from rural areas, but certain appropriate development, such as farm diversification, can be acceptable in principle, in which case the transport implications will be given careful consideration.

11.144 The Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2003) proposes a framework for different types of village within the Borough to enable transport priorities to be identified, and implemented, through Village Action Plans. Other rural transport issues addressed

in the Tunbridge Wells Borough Transport Strategy (2003) are the management of traffic and HGVs, safer routes to school and the provision of community transport.

### PARKING PROPOSALS

- 11.145** The Borough Council provides public car parks in many of the villages. In some cases these facilities are complemented by facilities provided by the Parish Council, most notably in Lamberhurst. As demand for spaces in village car parks is unlikely to reduce, it is essential to retain existing facilities whenever possible. This will ensure that, in particular, village centres are able to serve their respective rural hinterland and hence assist in maintaining the vitality and viability of these centres.

#### POLICY TP27

**The Local Planning Authority will seek to retain the following sites, as defined on the Proposals Map, for public car parking unless a convenient, suitable alternative is provided:**

**Bidborough Ridge, Bidborough;  
High Street, Brenchley;  
Falmouth Place, Five Oak Green;  
Balcombe's Hill, Goudhurst; and  
The Broadway, Lamberhurst; Adjacent to The Brown Trout Public House, Lamberhurst.**

## Implementation

### 11.146

<b>Policy Number</b>	<b>Implementing Agency</b>
TP10	Highways Agency
TP11	Highways Agency
TP12	Kent County Council
TP13	Network Rail, Train Operating Company
TP14	Network Rail, Train Operating Company
TP15	Kent County Council, Network Rail, Train Operating Company
TP16	Network Rail, Train Operating Company
TP17	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
TP18	Kent County Council
TP19	Kent County Council
TP21	Kent County Council

- 11.147** Other policies and paragraphs in this Chapter will seek to reserve land for transport and parking proposals, protect existing parking facilities and ensure that the transport and parking needs of new development are addressed through the Local Planning Authority's development control process.