

reduction. No priorities have yet been identified within this Plan area although the possibility that one or more schemes might be brought forward during the Plan period cannot be discounted.

8.33 No specific measures for cycleways are included in the Local Plan at this time. The practicality of implementing such measures

has not been investigated to the extent that routes might be defined. Resources are expected to be directed towards other traffic management measures during the Plan period. However, a county-wide cycling strategy is being prepared which may form the basis for considering firm proposals in any review of this Plan.



Highway Improvements

8.34 There are no highway proposals identified in the County Structure Plan for this Local Plan Area. When consulted on the County Transport Programme the Leominster District Council encouraged the Former County Council and Department of Transport, where necessary to undertake appropriate and environmentally acceptable highway improvements, in particular:

- (1) Proposals which support and enhance the strategic role of the east-west route comprising the A.44 from Wales to Leominster, the A.49(T) from Leominster to Brimfield, and the A.456 from Brimfield to the West Midlands conurbation;
- (2) Measures which assist prospects for employment by improving communications through strengthening links with the network of major roads and generally increase the effectiveness of the road hierarchy;
- (3) Schemes, including by-passes, to relieve those settlements and other areas affected by heavy traffic;
- (4) Measures to improve highway safety, especially pedestrian and cyclist safety.

8.35 The Government considers that heavier and larger lorries will be more economic and that the remoter rural areas, such as Wales, will benefit especially. An improved east-west route through the plan area is essential if the economies of Central Wales and the Marches are to be safeguarded, and balanced urban and rural communities fostered. Powys County Council are seeking the upgrading of the A.44 to a Trunk Road from Rhayader to the national motorway network. Hereford and Worcester County Council believed that the A.456 between Kidderminster and Brimfield

should be a trunk road and that this should then be extended westward to the Welsh Border along the A.44. Leominster District Council supported this objective. Significant improvements have been made with the opening of the Kington By-pass but further complementary works are needed. These might comprise small schemes of improvement undertaken from time to time although, in particular, the village of Pembridge is affected by heavy traffic and would benefit from some relief.

8.36 The network of distributor roads has an important role in assisting the economy of the area and improvements which aim to strengthen vehicle links between communities and the national/regional network are vital to this interest. In addition to the A.49(T), A.44 and A.456, the County Council identifies A.4112 (west of Leominster), A.438 and A.417 within this District as lorry route major links: these generally run east-west through the southern parts of the District. The A.4110 running parallel with and to the west of the A.49(T) attained greater importance for a period as an alternative north-south route: it should remain an important route but as one linking local communities with other major routes. There are other locally important routes linking settlements which are centres for economic development upon a scale suitable for rural areas.

8.37 The settlements and countryside within the plan area are extremely attractive and this should be a major consideration in all highway proposals. Heavy goods vehicles cause problems in parts of the plan area and these have been exacerbated by the increase in maximum lorry axle weights and sizes. It is important for communities to be protected by the implementation of a full and proper programme of highway works, traffic management measures and lorry routes. The construction of a by-pass for Pembridge was

supported by Hereford and Worcester County Council in principle. Leominster District Council considered this should be given a high priority and pressed the County Highway Authority to seek an early solution.

8.38 In order to improve highway safety the Council pressed the County Highway Authority to reduce the impact of roads and traffic through:

- (1) investigating methods of traffic calming, other traffic management measures and environmental improvements in suitable locations; and

- (2) allowing greater flexibility and sensitivity in the layout of residential development where possible.

8.39 These will apply to both urban areas and villages where through traffic is causing danger to the local community. Policy A.56(5) refers to highway design aspects for roads and footpaths in residential areas.

8.40 An important requirement in all instances will be for proposals to be environmentally acceptable in terms of their impact on the local environment.

POLICY A.78: PROTECTION OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

PROPOSALS WHICH AFFECT PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE:

- (1) THE CONTINUED AVAILABILITY OF AN IMPORTANT RIGHT OF WAY IS SECURED ALONG AN APPROPRIATE ALIGNMENT BOTH DURING AND AFTER DEVELOPMENT; AND
- (2) THE EFFECT OF THE DEVELOPMENT UPON THE RECREATIONAL ROLE OF THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY WILL NOT BE SIGNIFICANTLY DIMINISHED.

8.41 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Public Rights of Way are not eroded as part of development proposals. Within an attractive rural area it is also important that the recreational use of such routes are taken into account. Public rights of way can perform an important role in proving linkages within and between developments and will be encouraged as a means of contributing towards a reduction in the use of the private

car. The management, maintenance and creation of the Public Rights of Way network is the duty of the Council. It may be possible to extinguish or divert routes. However where they are important a suitable alternative should be provided which is not less convenient. The possibility that an alternative is not required may arise. Public Rights of Way are defined on the Definitive Public Rights of Way Map compiled by the Council.