

## Chapter 7: Transport and Accessibility



### **Aim 8** Transport and Accessibility

*To seek an integrated transport strategy, linked to land use objectives, which encourages a reduction in the need for travel, tackling traffic congestion and promoting public transport, cycling and walking as alternative means of travel to the use of the car.*

- 7.1 Movement Strategy
- 7.2 The Strategic Road Network
- 7.3 The Local Road Network
- 7.4 Rural Roads
- 7.5 Car Parking
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- 7.8 Ensuring Access for All
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## 7.1 Movement Strategy

- 7.1.1 The role of transport is a critical factor in promoting the development of Clonmel and its environs in a balanced and sustainable way. Corresponding investment provides significant benefits for the economy and community as a whole and, in keeping with the objectives of the National Spatial Strategy (NSS), is recognised as an important tool to promoting spatial balance.
- 7.1.2 Traffic levels in Clonmel increased over the period of the 2002 Plan, in excess of average patterns being experienced across the rest of the country. One of the principal aims of this Plan is therefore to promote an efficient, sustainable and integrated transport system, which combines both user choice and convenience whilst promoting economic and social development.
- 7.1.3 While the town has a relatively good standard of road infrastructure, and is well connected to the strategic road network via the N24 and the N8, investment in public transport remains severely lacking. The Council acknowledges that the private car will continue to dominate strategic movements within and through Clonmel over the life of this Plan, but it is important, where possible, to facilitate public transport as a viable alternative, to strengthen accessibility and avoid severance particularly to the north of the town as well as to local villages and rural areas. It is therefore necessary to ensure the protection of the existing road infrastructure while improving the capacity and safety of the road network to meet future development demands.
- 7.1.4 The viability and vitality of the town centre demands a better focus on local access, parking and pedestrian environment, such that the Central Area retail, business/commercial, housing and leisure/cultural facilities can best attract and retain those visiting and using Clonmel. Both strategic and local accessibility issues are important, in terms of getting to the town and of moving around the town, whilst the demands for through traffic have to be catered for in an efficient manner in order to limit congestion.
- 7.1.5 The Council recognises that integrated land use and transportation policies need to be pursued so that the continuing increase in car ownership and the projected growth in population do not have adverse effects on the future of Clonmel. Without intervention peak hour travel speeds will fall, while journey times will increase. The resultant environmental impacts of energy use and emissions could become significant.

**Policy TRANS.1:  
Sustainable  
Transport**

**More sustainable forms of transport (public transport, walking and cycling) will be supported and encouraged by the Council in order to reduce car usage and support the principles of sustainability.**

## 7.2 The Strategic Road Network

### *Clonmel Outer By-pass*

- 7.2.1 South Tipperary County Council, in conjunction with the National Roads Authority, has identified a preferred corridor for the Western N24 Clonmel By-pass. As described in Chapter 1, this corridor also provides a logical boundary to this Plan's northern extent. The Council considers it necessary that no development will be permitted along the identified corridor which would conflict with the aims of the national route.

**Policy TRANS.2:  
Clonmel Outer  
Bypass**

**The Council will support the improvements of the N24 National Road by reserving land at suitable locations, and/or preserving the route corridor free from inappropriate development which would undermine the implementation of future infrastructure proposals.**

### *Northern Radial Interconnectors and Access Roads*

- 7.2.2 A series of Northern Radial Interconnectors and Access Roads have been identified as proposed corridor reservations on the northern edge of Clonmel linking the Regional roads R688 and R689 to Powerstown and to the N24. Where possible the Council will seek the implementation of the route during the lifetime of this Plan as an integral part of adjoining new development where shown on the Borough Zoning Map and identified in Chapter 3.2 of the Plan.

**Policy TRANS. 3:  
Northern Radial  
Interconnectors  
and Access Roads**

**It is the policy of the Council to seek the implementation of the Northern Radial Interconnectors and Access Roads in conjunction with adjoining new development where appropriate and according to the proposed road corridor reservations and junction locations shown on the Landuse Zoning Maps 1A and 1B.**

- 7.2.3 The Council will also seek the provision of a new roundabout to service existing industrial lands on the R688 and investigate measures to improve traffic safety at the junction of the Cashel Road and the Haywood Road.

### *Frank Drohan Road*

- 7.2.4 The commitment to an outer strategic bypass via the N24 is considered an essential component of the transportation strategy for the town and environs. However, whilst a protected corridor has been identified, the by-pass will not be delivered within the timeframe of this Plan, requiring continued dependence on the role of the Frank Drohan Road to serve through traffic, whilst also providing access and responding to adjacent development demands.
- 7.2.5 Whereas the Frank Drohan Road has to date brought considerable relief from the routing of through traffic, the nature of the road and the restriction on local access, combined with the location of roundabouts at main junctions, the parallel alignment of the railway and difficulties in crossing the road, has created a degree of severance from the town centre, which is likely to be exacerbated as further development is expanded to the north.

**Policy TRANS.4:  
N24 Frank Drohan  
Road**

Development (except for that relating to employment policies at Ballingarrane and development of the Tipperary Institute Lands defined as a 'Key Opportunity Site') which would reduce traffic safety and carrying capacity of the N24 Frank Drohan Road will be resisted by the Council.

- 7.2.6 It is a requirement of the Council that new development in the vicinity of Frank Drohan Road be designed to maintain the carrying capacity of the road network, and also capable of delivering related measures such as junction, footpath and pedestrian crossing improvements.



*New roundabout at  
Ballingarrane*

**Other National and Regional Roads**

- 7.2.7 Clonmel and the environs are served by a well-connected network of roads in relation to the N24, which serves linkages between Limerick, Tipperary and Cahir to the west, and Carrick-on-Suir and Waterford to the east, together with the radial routes which connect the wider area of Clonmel and provide routings into the town centre.
- 7.2.8 For the continued prosperity of the town it is essential that this network is maintained and consolidated in response to development demands and growth patterns.

**Policy TRANS.5:  
Other National and  
Regional Road  
Improvements**

Inappropriate development on existing National Primary and Regional roads that may adversely impact on traffic safety and carrying capacity will be resisted by the Council. Support will be given to improvements in road infrastructure by reserving land in suitable locations, and/or protecting planned strategic route corridors by keeping them free from development that would otherwise undermine their future implementation.

- 7.2.9 This policy is aimed at facilitating road improvements, including localised road widening, capacity improvements to remove pinch points and bottlenecks, attention to crossings of the railway line to the south of the N24 and to the resolution of junction conditions on approaches to the town centre. Lands will also be reserved for improvement proposals by means of acquisition and development management where appropriate.

- 7.2.10 It is the intention of the Council to examine the need for upgrading the main radial routes such as the R688 and R689, with one or both potentially having a junction with the new outer by-pass. The Council will also commence investigation into the upgrading of the N76 link between Clonmel and Kilkenny, in view of Kilkenny's 'Hub' designation within the National Spatial Strategy.
- 7.2.11 The following specific road schemes across the regional road network will also be addressed:
- Widening and improvement to the vertical profile of the bridge over the railway on the southwards continuation of the R689 Fethard Road;
  - Provision of climbing lane on the R688 Cashel Road; and
  - New junction between Glenconnor Road and the N24.

### 7.3 The Local Road Network

#### *Town Traffic Management*

- 7.3.1 The management and appropriate use of the capacity of road space within the town is of major importance in the development of a sustainable transport strategy. With both traffic and pedestrian demands increasing, the need for more efficient use of road space and the role of traffic management becomes particularly significant.
- 7.3.2 The capacity of the existing routes must be managed to accommodate the needs of the various traffic modes in order to achieve a balanced transport system. The Council acknowledges that traffic signal installations, for example, are not linked and currently operate independently, while the merits of queue detection, central monitoring and the introduction of automated control systems will all need to be appraised. These and other measures will be progressed by the Council in line with the recommendations of the Clonmel Traffic Management Study (2006).

**Policy TRANS.6:  
Traffic  
Management**

**The Council will consider and seek to implement as appropriate the recommendations of the 2006 Clonmel Traffic Management Study, including the introduction of traffic calming measures within the Central Area where required to discourage car circulation, improvements to the pedestrian environment, and supporting the development of public transport services, pedestrian networks and cycle facilities.**

- 7.3.4 According to the findings of the Traffic Management Study, the Council will seek to implement specific transportation objectives that may include:
- Discouraging inefficient car circulation and through-routing;
  - Providing convenient arrangements for local servicing and deliveries;
  - Optimising junction capacities together with protected pedestrian crossing facilities;
  - Encouraging street activity in conjunction with the turnover of kerbside operations and parking;
  - Improving pedestrian priorities and street environment; and
  - Considering the provision of linked signal arrangements and the potential introduction of a co-ordinated monitoring control system.

### ***Scheme Improvements***

- 7.3.5 In relation to local road schemes it is also the intention of the Council to:
- Improve existing roads/junctions where necessary by the setting back of frontages of proposed buildings/new structures to enhance sight lines in the interests of traffic safety;
  - Reserve lands for road improvement proposals by means of acquisition and development management;
  - Implement traffic calming measures in residential areas where appropriate, and provide controlled pelican pedestrian facilities that have audible signalling and tactile paving at major crossing points to assist visually and mobility impaired people in negotiating the crossing of the road; and
  - Implement local signage improvements around the town.
- 7.3.6 The Council will seek financial contributions toward the costs of improving infrastructure that is associated with new development.
- 7.3.7 Other specific proposals for local road improvement include:
- Provision of a new roundabout at the junction of Marfield Road and the continuation of Irishtown;
  - Establish widening of Glenconnor Road;
  - Installation of traffic signal controls along Glenconnor Road to provide access into development areas to the west of the road;
  - Strictly controlling ribbon development along all routes to avoid the creation of additional traffic hazards;
  - Supporting the provision of bus shelters;
  - Provision of lighting and footpaths at Giantsgrave;
  - Improved road markings at Ardgeeha Hill; and
  - Provision of proposed new junctions and junction improvements as shown on the Landuse Zoning Maps 1A and 1B.

## **7.4 Rural Roads**

- 7.4.1 The area beyond the Frank Drohan Road to the north of the N24 has a sparsely established road network, comprising for the most part of narrow 2-way, north-south routings via the R688 and R689 with local access roads serving new housing areas.
- 7.4.2 It is the intention of the Council to maintain and consolidate as appropriate road connections in the rural areas, so as to reinforce the sustainability of the local villages within the wider environs.

## **7.5 Car Parking**

- 7.5.1 Due to the substantial proportion of the population living in the rural hinterland, there is a heavy dependence on the car. Consequently, the Council will continue to improve off-street parking facilities and seek development contributions towards the improvement of existing and provision of new car parks in the town where possible. The location of any new car parks will need to be carefully considered so as not to result in an increase of traffic through the town centre or disruption of pedestrian movements.
- 7.5.2 In accordance with the recommendations of the Traffic Management Study, off-street parking and multi-storey car parking facilities would be provided at strategic locations in

the Central Area and at edge-of-centre locations and reinforced by safe and convenient pedestrian linkages into the main retail/commercial zone.

**Policy TRANS.7:  
Car Parking  
Standards**

**The Council will adopt car parking standards within the Central Area that reduce on-street car parking in favour of off-street car parking and a restriction on long term (commuter) car parking facilities in favour of short term (business, leisure) car parking use.**

- 7.5.3 The reduction of on-street car parking in the Central Area is aimed at discouraging all-day commuter parking on streets in order to free-up spaces for casual business and shopping use. It also presents opportunities for implementing additional traffic calming measures and improving facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

## 7.6 Walking and Cycling

### *Pedestrians*

**Policy TRANS.8:  
Pedestrian  
Facilities**

**The Council will continue to improve facilities for pedestrians and, in particular, access facilities for people with special mobility needs in accordance with the aims of the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights.**

- 7.6.1 The Council recognises that there is considerable scope for further improvement in the pedestrian environment and that walking will be encouraged as the main means of movement throughout the town by facilitating improved pedestrian facilities on commuter walking routes, pedestrian priority measures in the Central Area, and requirements for new developments (through the Development Plan process) to incorporate pedestrian-friendly design. The provision of leisure routes, especially along the banks of the River Suir will be extended. In addition, the Council will seek to secure the improvement of existing footways, signage, streetscape improvements, and provision of cycle lanes and stands.
- 7.6.2 Further specific pedestrian improvement measures to be pursued by the Council, subject to resources, will include:
- The creation of pedestrian priority areas in the central area that form a network of linked pedestrian routes and spaces;
  - Establishing pedestrian routes to key locations such as the railway station and the Ballingarrane Campus;
  - Upgrading commuter walking routes and providing greater priority at street crossings and provision of improved lighting;
  - Extending the network of amenity walks within the town and environs, particular attention being paid to riverside walks and pedestrian bridges; and
  - Identification and provision of safe walking routes to schools.

### *Cyclists*

- 7.6.3 Cycling is a sustainable transport mode, as it is non-polluting, reduces congestion and contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Although some cycle lanes have been provided in a number of locations around the town, they are somewhat fragmented and it is recognised that a more integrated approach is required.

- 7.6.4 Increasing the currently low number and frequency of trips by cycle is dependent on measures that include traffic calming, traffic speed reduction and junction improvements as well as cycle specific actions such as cycle lanes and the provision of well designed cycle parking facilities.

**Policy TRANS.9:  
Development of  
Cycle Facilities**

The Council will encourage the incorporation of safe and efficient cycleways and routes into the design schemes for residential, educational, employment, and recreational developments. Development contributions will be sought towards the provision of strategic links rather than providing cycle lanes in housing estates where there is less demand for these facilities.



*New cycleways on  
the Fethard Road*

- 7.6.5 This policy is intended to promote the greater use of cycles for school trips and short journeys by establishing a strategic network of cycle lanes between the town centre and outer areas of the town. These will include radial routes from the outskirts into the town centre, routes within the town centre and orbital routes linking residential areas to facilities such as the Ballingarrane Campus.
- 7.6.6 The provision of cycle parking facilities or stands will be encouraged at suitable locations in the central area and in association with new large scale developments, such as offices, apartments, retail and industrial schemes.

## 7.7 Public Transport

- 7.7.1 Currently Clonmel is poorly served by public transport, with the majority of journeys within and to the town being made by private car. Although little significant change in travel patterns is anticipated over the course of the Plan, the improvement of local public transport facilities needs to be fully explored as an essential component of sustainable development within the town and environs.

### ***Rail Services***

- 7.7.2 The local rail station is poorly connected to the primary rail network in terms of service provision. Under current circumstances the current low-density catchment population in South Tipperary and the neighbouring counties does not render regional passenger rail a viable competitor to the private car.

***Policy TRANS.10:  
Rail Transport***

**The Council will support the improvement of rail services, and to protect lands adjacent to rail stations against encroachment by inappropriate uses that could compromise the long-term development of the rail facility.**

- 7.7.3 Whereas the Limerick-Waterford line serves a number of towns in South Tipperary, it has been down-graded and presently offers little in the way of commercial or passenger transport. It is nevertheless important for these routes to be protected in perpetuity, such that in time they may be upgraded to a standard that renders them more competitive with the private car.

### ***Bus Services***

- 7.7.4 With limited opportunity for expansion or use of rail services in the foreseeable future, the priority needs to be directed to the improvement of local bus services, which offer a more viable alternative. Particular attention needs to be paid to facilitate connections within the town, and especially to establish bus routes between new and potential development to the north and the town centre.

***Policy TRANS.11:  
Bus Transport***

**The Council will cooperate with relevant public and private companies and authorities to secure improvements in intra-County public transport service to operate throughout the town and the environs.**

- 7.7.5 An improvement in bus services would help reduce dependency on Central Area parking provision and limit transfer of shopping trips to out/edge-of-town locations. The Council will continue to work with local bus and hackney companies to improve public transport options. Pilot schemes that already exist include 'Ring-a-link' in the Clonmel area, Cashel and Slieveardagh areas. The Council will also promote schemes that use the school bus in off-peak times as rural public transport.
- 7.7.6 Improved bus services and facilities will be sought where appropriate through planning conditions, adoption of Travel Plan policies or further targeting of local pilot routes.

## 7.8 Ensuring Access for All

- 7.8.1 The Council recognises that less mobile members of the population, such as children, the elderly and the disabled, require ease of accessibility for social contact, shopping, entertainment, journey's to school, church, etc., while people with disabilities require specific measures to maximise mobility, such as the elimination of architectural obstacles and the appropriate equipping of public transport.

***Policy TRANS.12:  
Access Provision***

**The Council will ensure that in the design and planning of infrastructure and the integration of land use, infrastructure and transport modes that the widest spectrum of needs, including those with disabilities, are taken into account.**

- 7.8.2 The Council will seek to improve access to buildings and public spaces through the statutory development management process. This will include ensuring that all non-domestic developments, including where possible, change of use, alterations, and extensions to existing buildings, are accessible to people with special mobility needs, incorporating level access into the building.

## 7.9 Transport Assessments

- 7.9.1 Transport Assessments (TAs) can provide a comprehensive framework for appraising the impact of new developments on transport provision. In cases where new developments will have a significant effect on travel demand and on the capacity of the local transport network, in line with the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003, developers will be required to provide a detailed assessment by means of a TA. Regard will also be had to the NRA Policy Statement 'Development Management and Access to National Roads'. Specifically, Transport Assessments will also consider the cumulative impacts of traffic on the road networks created by neighbouring developments.

***Policy TRANS.13:  
Transport  
Assessment***

**Where new developments will have a significant effect on travel demand and the capacity of surrounding transport links, the Council will request that a Transport Assessment is carried out.**

- 7.9.2 The Council recognises that it is important for all modes of travel to be considered as an integral part of major development, including vehicular transport by car as well pedestrian/cycle and public transport modes. The Guidelines set down thresholds above which a TA will automatically be required. However, other particularly sensitive developments may also be subject to a TA where considered appropriate by the Council. The provision of a Mobility Management Plan/Green Travel Plan may also be requested in the case of large developments with intensive trip levels. In all cases pre-planning discussions will be encouraged to determine specific project requirements.