



## 6. Priority Road Users

### 6.1 Private cars

#### 6.1.1 General

The Government's White Paper declares that providing people with more travel choices was a major objective for Local Authorities to address in developing their Local Transport Plans. The City of York Council has embraced the objectives and created a 'hierarchy of transport users' to challenge the dominance of motorised travel, especially the car, which limits choice and opportunity, particularly for those without a car or for whom one is not available for most of the time.

#### 6.1.2 Pedestrians

Most residents are pedestrians for some of their journeys. They therefore require the opportunity to use safe, direct, secure and visually attractive routes to destinations such as local bus stops, shops, schools, parks and other community facilities, as well as the surrounding countryside.

Over the past decade initiatives implemented by the City of York have resulted in a significant growth in pedestrian activity; up to 16% of journeys to work and 54% of journeys to schools (June 2000). This encouraging increase is due in part to the creation of a Pedestrian Strategy which includes an awareness of the benefits of walking and the development of a city-wide network of priority pedestrian routes which are safe, convenient and easy to use.

The key to accommodating the pedestrian is the creation of a walkable neighbourhood. This can be achieved through the detailed design of footpaths and pedestrian areas which reduce the dominance of the car. Consideration should also be given to children's play patterns as it is common for residential roads to be crossed frequently by children. Carriageways and parking areas may also be used as play areas within the development.

Pedestrian footpaths should link up with traffic calming schemes to provide a safer and more pleasant environment. Access for the elderly and people with



mobility problems can be improved by providing dropped kerbs, tactile paving etc.

### 6.1.3 Cycling

Cycling is one of the most environmentally friendly forms of transport, but unfortunately despite the health benefits cyclists are one of the most vulnerable groups of road user. Children are particularly at risk when out at play around the home or when going to and from school. Their safety is largely dependent on the flow and speed of motor traffic which can be regulated through the design process. It is therefore paramount when designing a residential area that proper provision is made for cyclists by the creation of safe, direct and secure routes and facilities.



*Figure 2 – Pedestrian/Cycle link*

York has continued to exhibit a high level of cycling with over 19% of journeys to work being made by cycle (2000 survey) in the new administrative district. The cornerstone of maintaining high cycle usage in the York area is the designation of a 200 Km network of Safe Cycle Routes made up of open spaces, riverside paths, cycle lanes, shared use footpaths and facilities at traffic signals. The network is being extended to link outlying villages to the City Centre, Park and Ride sites, and major developments on the edge of city i.e. retail/leisure and employment centres.



It will be a requirement for all new development to encourage the use of cycling by the creation of direct, low traffic flow and low traffic speed links to the cycle network and to local shops, schools and other facilities.

#### **6.1.4 Public Transport**

It is estimated that some 30% of the population do not have access to a private car. It is therefore essential that a viable network of public transport services is available to these people. Whilst it is acknowledged that a percentage of residential developments will not be large enough or of such design that the penetration of buses will be practical, it is nevertheless essential that good, direct and secure links are provided to the public transport network for both pedestrians and cyclists.

Whilst the patronage of public transport may appear low compared with other modes, the partnership between the City and public transport operators has led to an increase of more than 50% since the partnership began. The development of "metro" style services along major corridors of movement, complemented by the Easylink Service, help to provide services in areas of lower demand. They also provide more accessible services with good penetration of residential areas for those people for whom a good local bus service is vital to their personal mobility, and should encourage greater usage.

In all new residential developments the potential for improved public transport accessibility needs to be assessed, whether this is through direct access or via links to the existing network. Further advice on this can be obtained from the Department of Transport publication '*A guide to best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure*'. Pedestrian and cycle links to bus stops with improved facilities for waiting passengers in a safe, secure and well lit manner will be a requirement in new development.

#### **6.1.5 Emergency and Service Vehicles**

Access for emergency vehicles goes without saying, but dependent upon the nature and size of the development will depend on the degree of access required, particularly for fire emergencies, and early consultation with the Fire and Rescue Service is required. Access for ambulances is often taken for granted as they are a 'vehicle' but again if a new layout is to be more pedestrian and cycle orientated it is essential that the Ambulance service is consulted to ensure properties are easily identified and accessible so as to minimise lost time that could save lives.

Whilst crime and security are covered elsewhere in this guide it is essential that the police can gain easy access to the area and a balance needs to be



struck between access for pedestrians and cyclists, and escape routes for criminals and vandals.

Residential estates will not be expected to provide access for the ultimate size of service vehicles, but each road and turning area will be expected to be able to accommodate the standard “Design Vehicle”.

Similarly large Housing Courts and Mews will be expected to provide reasonable access for service vehicles, through archways for example, where it is intended to preserve the character of a street frontage.

### **6.1.6 Private Cars**

The City of York Council acknowledges that there is a clear role for the private car in the economic and social life of the city and, whilst the restraint of private car usage for certain journeys is an objective of the Local Transport Plan, car ownership continues to grow. There is a clear need therefore to promote alternative modes of travel to encourage restraint. However, as a high priority for the majority of residents is to own a car, proper provision for the parking of vehicles at home is essential.

The speed of traffic on our roads is a major cause of accidents. A child or pedestrian struck by a vehicle travelling at 40mph is likely to be killed, whereas a similar incident involving a vehicle travelling less than 20mph may only result in minor injuries. The control of the speed of traffic in residential areas will therefore be a major element in the design of new residential roads, and the developer must address this at the onset of the design. Speed restraint measures should be built into the design and not ‘bolted on’ as an after thought; there is plenty of scope within the design to adapt highway standards to achieve a co-ordinated approach to speed restraint and encourage other forms of travel for local journeys.





*Figure 3 – Off-Street Parking*

The parking of vehicles is discussed later, but parking provision should be framed with good design in mind recognising that car ownership varies with income, age, and the type of housing and its location. It is however, important to state at this point, that proper and adequate car parking must be provided in a safe and secure location, close to the home and in sight of their owners, but must not dominate the street scene, as can happen with high density housing. The Council will seek to minimise car parking standards dependent upon location and the recommended maximum car parking provision as outlined in *PPG 3* where good alternative forms of transport are available. The judicious use of landscaping and screening can play an important role in reducing the impact of the private car.