

Transport for Buckinghamshire



Buckinghamshire Freight Strategy



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1. Executive Summary

The freight strategy examines freight in Buckinghamshire within the context of national freight statistics. The strategy then goes on to explain the County Council's strategic approach to freight management before identifying the key freight management tools available in Buckinghamshire and developing distinct freight policies to guide future freight management at a local level.

2. Introduction

This Freight Strategy has been commissioned as part of ongoing work to fulfil the obligations of the Traffic Management Act 2004. A policy context for the freight strategy is contained in Appendix 1 and demonstrates the link between the Freight Strategy and wider transport and corporate policy.

There have been two rounds of consultation for the strategy. The first consultation went to Local Area Forums to ask what specific principles should underpin the Freight Strategy. The second round was open to the public and lasted for six weeks. The strategy, as well as the consultation on the strategy, provides local communities the opportunity to have a clear understanding of the importance of freight to Buckinghamshire's economy and Buckinghamshire County Council's powers in the management of freight. The feedback from the consultation was in general agreement with the principles of the document however there was a feeling that the action points should be emphasised. The freight policies highlighted in the strategy will be actioned at a local level through the LTP3 implementation plan, the business planning processes and working with communities to facilitate delivery at a local level.

The anticipated audience for this document covers a number of groups including:

- Local authority and other public service officials seeking to integrate freight transport considerations into their particular service
- Local communities to facilitate their understanding of the freight transport tools available to the Transport Authority and to enable action at a local level
- Freight companies operating in the county
- Wider business interest who rely on HGV and other freight vehicles to transport items in support of their business
- General public, be they residents experiencing issues relating to HGV traffic, or consumers of goods and services made available by the movement of freight to and through Buckinghamshire.

Introduction to Buckinghamshire

A relatively small County lying north-west of London, Buckinghamshire is approximately 50 miles in length but just 10 miles wide at its narrowest point. With a current population of 487,000, almost 40% of the population live in the two main towns of Aylesbury and High Wycombe. The north of the County is predominantly rural, containing a few small market towns and a large number of villages. The south of the County, most

of which lies within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Metropolitan Green Belt, is more densely populated.

The County has good transport links, particularly to London and Birmingham. The M4, M40 and M25 motorways pass through the periphery of the County. There are good rail connections to London from Aylesbury and the south of the County, and to Birmingham and beyond from High Wycombe, but currently no East to West link. The River Thames and the Grand Union Canal are the principal waterways within Buckinghamshire. The historical legacy of the road network is one of radial routes that tend to naturally pull traffic towards and through the two major towns. The road network measures over 3250km.

For a long time there has been a sizeable imbalance between the number of jobs in Buckinghamshire and number of employed residents. This contributes to very high levels of out-commuting. There are also high levels of in-commuting, particularly in the south of the County. Given current levels of the availability and accessibility of jobs and key services in many parts of the County, measures of car dependency are extremely high compared to national and regional averages. On average Buckinghamshire residents travelled further to work than in any other area in the South East, putting a significant strain on certain parts of the highway network, and contributing to Buckinghamshire's large carbon dioxide 'footprint'.

The South East Plan, which identified the Milton Keynes and South Midlands (MKSM) sub-region as a growth area and planned for 16,800 houses in the Aylesbury urban area, has been revoked and new housing targets have not yet been agreed. However, there are housing developments in Aylesbury which have been committed and others that are expected. Housing development of this nature would be expected to generate additional freight movement from, into and around Buckinghamshire during the construction period. In parallel to the growth in housing there would also need to be related business growth which may lead to an increase in the amount of freight on Buckinghamshire's roads.

Within rural areas agriculture is the predominant land use, over 70% by area. Buckinghamshire's economy is presently worth around £5.6bn pa¹. The key areas of growth have been in financial and business services and there is a strong public services and health sector. Manufacturing continues to be an important sector for the County, employing more than 1 in 10 workers. These sectors have a frequent use of freight.

Definitions

In understanding the freight industry, it is helpful to outline some definitions and measurements which describe freight activity:

Freight Transport is the movement of goods or burden from point to point in the course of a commercial transaction. The nature and size of individual operations vary enormously, covering a wide-ranging remit including road, rail, water, air transport and pipeline².

Logistics is the broader concept of freight activity involving the total supply chain for individual organisations or products. It involves the production process including purchase, manufacturing, storage and interchange distribution, as well as the actual transport of goods.

¹ http://www.bucks-ep.co.uk/bucks_economy.aspx accessed on 02/11/08

² Local Authority Freight Management Guide, January 2007, p. 1

Freight Tonnes Lifted is the traditional measure of freight transport activity. Tonnes moved can also be measured in *tonne kilometres (tkm)*. This is the weight of freight lifted multiplied by the distance carried and provides an easier comparison between market shares across different modes of transport and is more effective in identifying modal activity and impact.

Bulk Freight is the term used for large volumes of the same or similar cargos between specialised terminals and usually employing specialised equipment. Examples are large flows of raw materials for industrial production such as coal for power generation. It might also apply to significant flows of finished products such as cars. **Non-bulk freight** is where goods are carried in smaller units generally single lorry units or containers. These are typically higher value commodities such as finished products or retail goods.

Heavy Goods Vehicle³ – referred to throughout this Strategy as HGVs. HGV are goods motor vehicles (i.e. trucks / lorries) with a maximum allowed mass of over 3.5 tonnes).

Light Goods Vehicle – referred to throughout the strategy as LGVs. Includes car based vans, pick ups, transit type vans with single and double rear wheels, 3 wheeled goods vehicles, milk floats and pedestrian controlled motor vehicles. Also includes ambulances and light agricultural tractors/trailers and all goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes gross vehicles weight.

Strategic Inter-Urban Routes- These strategic distributor roads link the main towns of the County to the Regional and National highway network. They are usually Motorway, Trunk or A roads and incorporate many roads from the Primary Route Network. The prime function of this part of the network is to support the efficient movement of motor traffic including freight distribution. Longer distance traffic movements to and between towns should be directed onto these roads.

3. Freight Activity in Buckinghamshire and the UK

To place the management of freight within Buckinghamshire into perspective an appreciation of both the freight activity of Buckinghamshire and that of the UK is needed.

3.1 Freight within rural Buckinghamshire

In the context of freight distribution rural transport is the movement of goods and services to and from destinations in the countryside to serve the economy of a rural area. Whilst much of the rural economy depends on agriculture, especially in the north of Buckinghamshire, in recent years farm diversification has led to the establishment of many businesses in former farm buildings which both generate freight and need service and delivery transport.

Economic activity in rural areas involves much more than agriculture. Many industrial estates have developed round the smaller market towns and the populations of rural settlements are growing as experienced workers seeking better living conditions move out of larger towns and cities. The shops and pubs that remain in rural communities need to be supplied. 33.6% of households in Buckinghamshire are in rural areas and rural residents need to have their post delivered and their waste collected in the same way as residents of urban areas.

³ In Europe these are now known as Large Good Vehicles as not all countries in Europe had a word for heavy. This can cause confusion with the Light Goods Vehicle. This strategy consistently refers to Heavy Goods Vehicles and Light Goods Vehicles.

Many of the access trips to rural destinations by HGVs will have to use roads that do not form part of the strategic inter urban route or the primary road network for instance an unclassified road to access a farm. Inevitably these roads are more likely to pass through small towns and villages. Even though the flow of goods vehicles may be low, this is often in the context where other traffic flows are also low, in some cases resulting in the goods vehicles representing an unexpectedly high percentage of overall traffic. In such situations the HGVs are more noticeable and their presence in town and villages can cause adverse environmental effects, particularly if roads and footways are narrow. In Buckinghamshire HGVs are, on average, 3.13% of vehicles on rural roads.

Recent years have led to changes in the size and type of agricultural vehicles servicing farms and other rural businesses. For instance the daily milk tanker to dairy farms is today a much larger vehicle than it would have been 20 years ago and fertilizer may be delivered by articulated HGV, yet most minor roads in rural areas have changed little in the past 50 years. The impact on the road and on local communities can be exacerbated by large agricultural vehicles sharing the road network at particular times (such as harvest) albeit for short distances. Other than widening the unclassified rural roads to better accommodate the larger vehicles (which may have a negative impact on the character of the rural areas and would be prohibitively expensive) Buckinghamshire County Council has limited powers to address this issue.

Often large operating centres, distribution centres and industrial estates are on the edges of towns or on rural sites close to a trunk road or railway lines. However a significant number are located deep in rural areas, despite the inefficiency of using roads off the trunk and primary networks for access. These are the result of farm diversification, or the change of use of old airfields or the change of use of industrial premises. In many cases planning consent is not required, and where a redevelopment will end up with fewer vehicles accessing the site there are no grounds for objections from the highways authority. However, where planning consent is required such approval should only be given if the local network of roads used to access the industrial estate are of a suitable quality and the HGV traffic generated by the centre does not pose as environmental or safety threat to local residents.

There are 120 areas in Buckinghamshire that warrant a 'Conservation Management Plan'⁴. These areas may be particularly sensitive to the impacts of freight. For more information on conservation management plan please refer to each District Council's webpage and search for 'conservation management plan'.

3.2 Freight within urban Buckinghamshire

Many of the origins and destinations for industry's supply chains are in urban areas, so it is inevitable that LGVs and HGVs have to enter urban areas to collect and deliver their goods. Although most of the miles travelled by HGVs take place on primary routes, designed for the movement of goods, urban travel is vital for freight distribution and is also the time when freight distribution has adverse impacts on most people. In addition to entering urban areas to collect or deliver freight, goods vehicles pass through urban areas

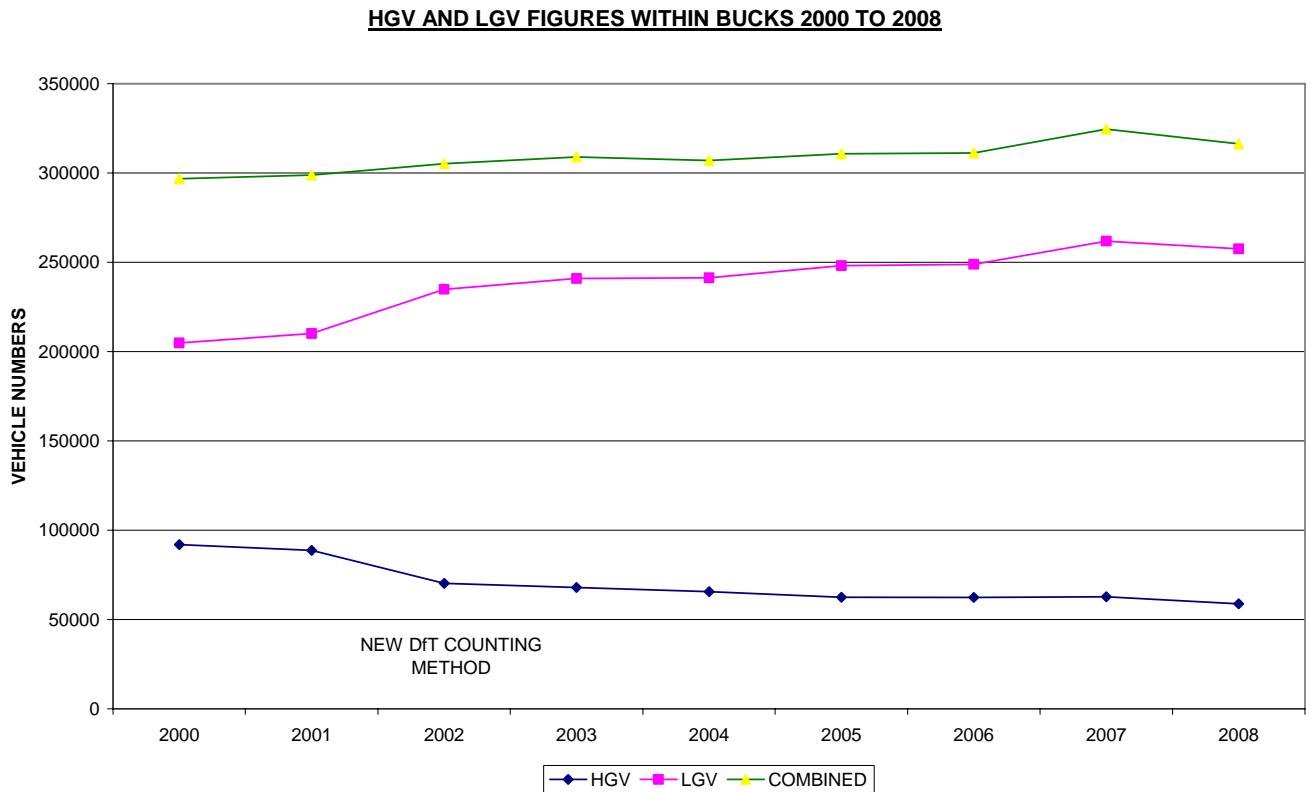
⁴ Conservation Areas can include groups of listed or unlisted buildings, historic village greens and open spaces, important trees, unusual historic field patterns (where these have district wide significance), well preserved archaeological remains and/or surviving historic street patterns.

where these encompass main roads that form primary routes or part of the strategic inter urban corridors (such as the A41 and the A413 going through Aylesbury).

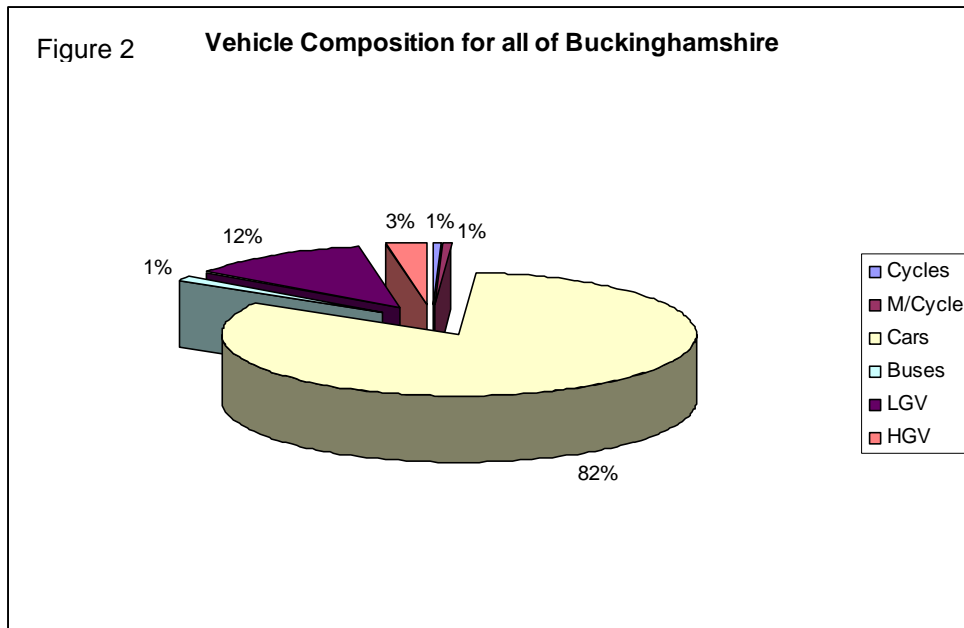
The growth in edge of town and out of town retail and industrial estates have moved some of the focus of economic activity and its associate lorry traffic away from urban centres to the periphery beyond. However this can mean that the impact of the HGVs is moved from main roads onto more residential roads as they access destination that are not part of the strategic road network.

With changing household structures, longer working hours and a redefined role of women in society, the demands and constraints upon people's time can be considerable and have led to increasing demand for services that increase flexibility such as internet shopping services; customers can survey and pick their goods whilst going nowhere near the shop. Due to the changes in patterns of consumption for reasons such as internet shopping there are more LGVs and HGVs delivering 'to the door'. So the groceries, or books or spring bulbs or furniture ordered over the internet are delivered to each individual household.

Figure 1



The graph above shows that whilst there has been an increase in the overall amounts of freight vehicles using Buckinghamshire's road network in recent years the numbers of HGV traversing Buckinghamshire are steadily declining. This is linked to an increase in the number of LGVs and accounts for the increasing amount of freight. This can be explained by the changes in the distribution patterns as explained later in this chapter.



The graph above shows that HGVs account for only 3% of the vehicles on Buckinghamshire's roads. This is not a large HGV to car ratio. However the data shows that LGVs account for a significant number of the vehicles on Buckinghamshire's roads. The larger end of the LGV spectrum can easily be confused with the lower end of the HGV spectrum, however these vehicles can be driven by people with a standard car driving license. The increase in the number of LGVs matches that of the national trend where LGVs have increased significantly over the last 10 years, increasing their percentage share of the road traffic in great Britain from 11% in 1999 to 13% in 2009.

Loading and Unloading / HGV parking

Civil Parking Enforcement is currently run in the three of the four districts by the District Councils. During 2011/12 on-street parking enforcement will revert to the County Council. Civil Parking Enforcement (CEA) is where enforcement of waiting restrictions is undertaken by the local authority rather than the Police. The South Bucks District parking enforcement remains with the police at this time.

Loading and unloading can take place on yellow lines provided there is not a loading ban. Civil Enforcement Officers will allow a period of time for the loading or unloading to take place provided that loading/unloading is observed.

Rail freight

The economic activity in Buckinghamshire on the rail network with potential to generate freight (eg heavy industry) is limited. As such, waste makes up the vast majority of rail freight that traverses Buckinghamshire. Waste has been carried by train from Hillingdon to Calvert in Buckinghamshire since the late 1970s. Calvert is a landfill site in north Aylesbury Vale. The line, a single track of the former Great Central alignment through remains open as far as the disused Varsity Line for freight. The waste transfer station at Calvert Landfill Site is operated by the Waste Recycling Group. Five container trains each day use the site: four from London and one from Bath and Bristol . The containers, each of which contains 14 tons of waste, are unloaded at the transfer station onto Lorries awaiting alongside which then transport the waste to the landfill site.

Buckinghamshire County Council is currently investigating if the transfer of the County's waste by rail can be increased; the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation Report proposes 'to minimise the movements of minerals and waste by road, through a combination of a reduction in mileage travelled and the use of more sustainable methods of transport'⁵, this would include transfer by rail.

Air Freight

Whilst Buckinghamshire does not have significant airports within its borders both Heathrow and Luton are close to the County and freight traffic that is accessing these airports uses Buckinghamshire's road network. There are air freight forwarding and storage facilities in Buckinghamshire, particularly in the south of the County.

3.3 Freight Activity in the UK

To place the freight picture in Buckinghamshire into perspective an appreciation of the UK freight activity is needed. Government statistics indicate that the UK freight and logistics industry accounts for some 6% of GDP and employs about 1.75 million people. However, it may be considered that the freight sector has even greater significance as international trade in goods accounts for a further 30% of GDP. All this freight passes through UK ports, airports, or the Channel Tunnel.

The data that the Department for Transport (DfT) supplies about freight differs from the information that is gathered at local authority level. Instead of reporting Freight Tonnes Lifted Buckinghamshire County Council reports numbers of classified vehicles. This means that whilst there cannot be any direct comparisons between the County and the national freight data, trends can be compared.

Total Freight Activity

Total freight tonnes lifted within the UK in 2007 divided into the various transport modes is summarised in Table 1. This information is from Department for Transport statistics. As can be seen from the table below the vast majority of freight in the UK is moved by road freight.

Table 1. Million Tonnes Lifted in 2007 and 2008⁶

Transfer Method	Million Tonnes		Modal Split ⁷	
	2007	2008	2007	2008
Road	2,001	1868	84.2%	83.4%
Rail	102	103	4.3%	4.6%
Water	126	123	5.3%	5.5%
Pipeline	146	147	6.2%	6.6%
Total Tonnes Transferred	2,376	2,241	100%	100%

⁵

http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/assets/content/bcc/docs/strategic_planning/waste_mineral_plans/cs_po_main_document.pdf accessed on 22/09/10

⁶ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/chapter42009.xls> accessed on 22/09/10

⁷ Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Road Freight

Britain is generally regarded as having a highly efficient freight transport sector. This is dominated, in terms of volumes carried, employment and value by a highly competitive road haulage industry. Road freight is price sensitive, responsive to customer needs, and structured around operations by industries and retailers and to a lesser degree the general public. Haulage specialists offer total logistics packages and warehousing for customers, with smaller, often single owner drivers, filling gaps in the freight transport market. Road haulage operates in an open free access market competing on price and quality. It is also open to competition from within the European Union, with growing volumes of international road freight carried and operated by vehicles based outside the UK. These vehicles may also compete for domestic freight and UK export traffic.

Table 2. Freight transport by road: goods lifted by goods vehicle over 3.5 tonnes⁸

Gross weight of vehicle	Million Tonnes			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Over 3.5 tonnes up to 25 tonnes	257	256	245	230
Over 25 tonnes	1,489	1,557	1,624	1,504
All weights	1,746	1,813	1,869	1,734

Table 3 Domestic Road Freight moved by commodity⁹

Commodity Group	Billion tonne-kms	Percentage of road freight
Agricultural products and live animals	13.4	8
Foodstuffs and animal fodder	37.5	23
Solid mineral fuels	1.1	1
Petroleum products	6.5	4
Ores and metal waste	1.8	1
Metal products	5.7	3
Crude and manufactured minerals and building materials	22.4	14
Fertilisers	1.9	1
Chemicals	7.3	4
Machinery, transport equipment, manufactured articles and miscellaneous articles	66.0	40
All commodities	163.5	100

The above information is not available for the freight travelling to, from, and throughout Buckinghamshire. As can be seen from the table the commodities that support the rural economy such as the agricultural products and live animals, foodstuffs and animal fodder and fertilisers form 32% of the commodities being transported around the country. As such the vehicles transporting these commodities have a legitimate reason to access the rural road as either the origin or destination for their loads.

⁸ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/chapter42009.xls> accessed on 22/09/10

⁹ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/chapter42009.xls> accessed on 22/09/10

LGVs¹⁰

There is national recognition of the substantial growth and diversity of the van. In 2007 there were 3.2 million licensed light goods vehicles (LGVs) registered in Great Britain, which is 9 per cent of total licensed vehicles and account for 13 per cent of total traffic in Great Britain. This traffic has increased by 40 per cent between 1997 and 2007 and has accounted for 31 per cent of all new traffic in that period.

In regards to the primary use of LGVs, 'the carriage of equipment, tools and/or materials to provide a service' accounts for 51 per cent of the average weekly mileage and 50 per cent of the vehicles. The 'delivery/collection of goods' accounts for a further 28 per cent of the mileage but only 21 per cent of the stock. 'Private and domestic non-business' use is 9 per cent of the mileage but 18 per cent of the stock. 'Providing transport' represents 3 per cent of both the mileage and the number of LGVs. The remainder did not have a primary use specified (Table 3).

Table 4¹¹: Percentage share of weekly mileage and LGV vehicle numbers by primary use¹²

Primary Use	Share of mileage	Share of LGV numbers
Delivery / collection of goods	28%	21%
Carriage of equipment	51%	50%
Providing transport	3%	3%
Private and domestic	9%	18%
Not specified	8%	9%

Table 5¹³: Percentage share of vehicles by primary use and business activity¹⁴

Primary use						
Business Activity	Delivery / collection of goods	Carriage of equipment	Providing transport	Private and domestic	Not specified	Total
Infrastructure maintenance	0%	7%	0%	0%	0%	7%
Goods collection and delivery	12%	1%	0%	0%	0%	13%
Service provider	3%	33%	0%	2%	0%	40%
Other	5%	8%	1%	2%	1%	18%
Not specified / Not applicable	1%	1%	0%	13%	7%	23%

¹⁰ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/vanactivitybaseline08/vabs08.pdf> accessed on 22/09/10

¹¹ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/vanactivitybaseline08/vabs08.pdf>

¹² Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

¹³ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/vanactivitybaseline08/vabs08.pdf>

¹⁴ Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding

Total	21%	50%	3%	18%	9%	100%
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As can be seen from Table 5 the service industry accounts for 40% of vehicles by primary use and business activity. This may reflect the changes in the UK economy towards a 'service economy' and is reflected by the Buckinghamshire traffic data.

Rail Freight

Rail freight data is provided by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) and is much more current than the DfT road and waterborne freight data. As you can see in Figure 3 The ORR report that the total freight movement for 2009-10 was 19.06 billion net tonne kilometers which is a 7.6% decrease compared to the previous year. Freight moved has now fallen for three years in a row, with 2008-09 experiencing a 2.6% decrease compared to 2007-08, and 2007-08 experiencing a 3.2% decrease compared to 2006-07. The total freight moved is at its lowest level since 2003-04

Figure 3. Rail freight moved¹⁵

Great Britain annual data 1987-88 to 2009-2010 (billion net tonne kilometers)

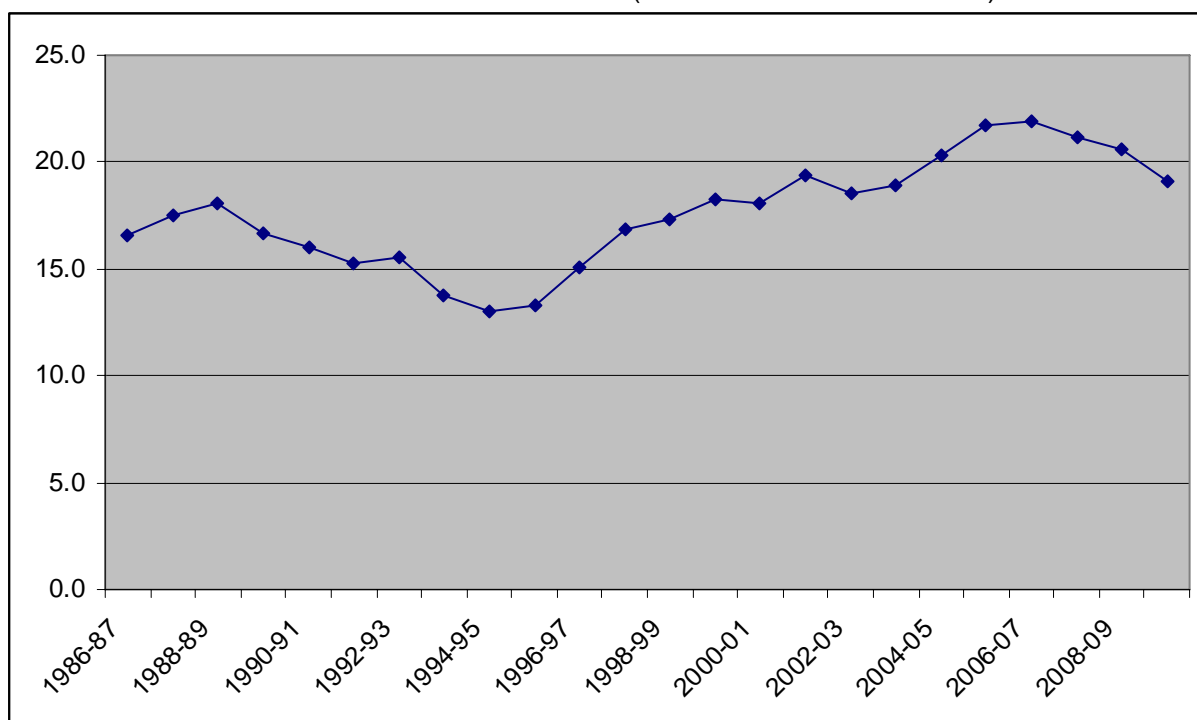


Table 6. Impacts on Road Haulage (Great Britain 2003-04 to 2007-08)¹⁶

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% Change on 2007-08	Change on
Rail freight lorry km equivalent (billions)	1.35	1.20	1.22	1.36	1.38	1.36	-1.0	
Avoided lorry journeys	5.89	6.95	6.74	6.58	6.69	6.99	4.4	

¹⁵ Source: ORR, National Rail Trends Report, published 16th Sept 2010: http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/xls/nrt_ch3_freight.xls

¹⁶ Source: ORR, National Rail Trends Report, published 16th Sept 2010: http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/upload/pdf/nrt_ch3_freight.pdf

(million)							
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In Table 6 'rail freight lorry equivalent' represents the equivalent distance that road vehicles would need to have travelled to move the amount of freight carried on rail, which is affected more by volume than by weight. 'Avoided lorry journeys' represents the equivalent number of road vehicle trips necessary to move this freight.

Waterborne transport within the UK

Efficient shipping forms a vital part of the UK economy and an important element of freight movement. 95% of Britain's external trade (by weight) and 7% of domestic freight moves by water. This represents 25% in terms of tonne kilometres. (*Sea and Water 2005*). Waterborne transport on internal waters (such as canals) accounts for 2% (or 2.6 million tonnes of good transferred) of waterborne transport within the UK¹⁷.

Air Freight

Air freight within the UK is very small, amounting to over 2.1 million tonnes, as calculated by the Civil Aviation Authority. This represents around only 0.1% of the total freight tonnes lifted. The air freight market in the UK has developed a concentration around Heathrow because that is where the mass of carrying long-haul bellyhold capacity is offered. Heathrow has a 59% share of the market in air freight¹⁸.

Changing Distribution Patterns

There are many things that can influence trends in distribution such as:

- Shift in production in the UK economy away from traditional manufacturing and primary industry towards higher value production and a service based economy in which goods transportation plays a smaller role
- Average journey lengths have increased as industry moves towards more centralisation of production and storage. A significant cause of this is the very low cost of freight movement by road as a proportion of total manufacturing or even logistics costs.
- Changes in UK legislation meaning that heavier lorries are allowed, Government increased the maximum gross weight of lorries from 41 tonnes to 44 tonnes in February 2001 however the Government has rejected trials of 60-tonne 25.5 metre lorries on UK roads on economic, environmental and social grounds
- Development in logistics processes eg Just In Time
- European legislation such as the working time directive
- The freight industry is extremely sensitive to changes in the economy. Recent observed decreases in the amount of freight on the roads and recorded decreases on the raw materials carried on rail support this suggestion.
- Changes in demand such as the increased demand of goods via the internet have increased the number of LGVs making deliveries.
- Fuel prices can affect what is delivered and the way it is delivered
- Technology such as increasingly efficient engines and Vehicle Telematics

¹⁷ Movement of Freight by Water UK 2004 (source: DfT)

¹⁸ Source: DfT 1998 Air Freight Study:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/165217/ukairfreightPDF>

- Increasing demands for companies to reduce their carbon footprints
- Increasing customer expectations – wanting a wider choice of goods at lower prices and in quicker time.

These and other factors can interact with each other and combine to constantly but inconsistency effect distribution patterns within the UK. The long term trend is of an increase in freight vehicles although this is represented by an increase in LGVs as opposed to HGVs. However this may be affected in the short term by the current recession and changes to fuel prices.

4. Management of Freight within Buckinghamshire

4.1 Our Approach

The strategic aim is to provide a framework to help facilitate the safe and efficient transportation of freight into, out of, and within Buckinghamshire, supporting a strong local economy, whilst taking into account the existing and future needs of our society and the environment.

This will be achieved through:

- Working with partners such as freight companies, developers, community representatives and the police to ensure improved understanding and communication and to maximise the contribution of freight to maintaining and enhancing the County's economic competitiveness;
- Being part of the Network Management Plan¹⁹
- Where practicable to minimise and mitigate the environmental impacts of freight; especially the noise, odours and emissions; and
- Reducing congestion for all vehicle types to allow smooth and quick passage through Buckinghamshire.

The 3rd Local Transport Plan

The Freight Strategy supports the delivery of the third Local Transport Plan (LTP3) and will be implemented as part of its implementation plan. This will be revised annually through the business planning process. The Freight Strategy will contribute to the five themes highlighted in LTP3:

- Thriving Economy
- Sustainable Environment
- Cohesive and Strong Communities
- Health and Well Being
- Safe Communities

¹⁹ The Network management Plan is a requirement of the network management Duties of the Traffic Management Act 2004

4.2 Weight restrictions

Residents told us they would like to see more weight restrictions to prevent HGVs using inappropriate roads



Buckinghamshire County Council has powers to apply weight limits to roads to manage the HGV usage. It is a legal control on a specified vehicle weight or width, on certain roads and routes. Weight restrictions can be imposed for structural, safety or for environmental reasons.

The procedures for making Traffic Regulation Orders are laid down by the Secretary of State and must be observed by the Order-Making Authority. The procedures require the authority to consult on the proposed Traffic Regulation Order and then publish notices on site and in the local press detailing the proposal and inviting any objections. Weight limits are a form of Traffic Regulation Order, mostly introduced to protect parts of the highway network such as weak bridges. The signs associated with the weight limit indicate the maximum gross vehicle weight of vehicles permitted to use the bridge to which the weight limit applies.

The restrictions prevent large vehicles from using inappropriate roads, routes and areas in order to:

- Reduce danger to pedestrians and other road users
- Prevent damage to buildings, roads and bridges
- Preserve the character, amenity and environment of an area
- Reduce and manage congestion on the roads

Where the weight limit is applied for structural reasons, the structure will be assessed. If it is found to be weak, the safe working load which the structure can carry will be calculated. The Local Traffic Management Team will then apply a suitable weight limit.

Where the use of a road by HGVs is causing environmental problems; residents or Councilors may request the introduction of a weight limit. On the majority of roads, however, access by HGVs, will be required to allow delivery to local shops and pubs, refuse vehicles, and skip wagons to residential properties and to service local businesses including farms. As such many people and businesses could be affected by a weight limit. In some areas, an "except for access" clause has been built into the Traffic Regulation Order, but this is reliant upon enforcement and it is extremely difficult to distinguish between local HGVs and HGVs using it as a through route. As a consequence, environmental weight limits are seldom used unless there is an acceptable diversion route and there are no local businesses, farms or shops within the restricted area.

The Thames Valley Police enforce weight restrictions in Buckinghamshire. An 'except for access' clause is particularly difficult to enforce as Police need to observe an offence taking place before they can take effective action. Due to enforcement difficulties, where possible physical measures should be introduced to prevent any abuse of the restrictions; the installation of signs alone are largely ineffective. Restrictions will not be used if there is no suitable alternative route for the displaced traffic.

In many rural parts of Buckinghamshire weight restrictions are not a feasible method of freight management as they could possibly prevent vehicles such as heavy tractors with

trailers accessing land as well as other vehicles connected to agriculture such as cattle wagons, milk lorries, lorries containing feed or fertilizer getting to the destination farms.

Freight Policy No. 1

Buckinghamshire County Council will continue to consider environmental weight restrictions where there is significant use by non local HGVs and there is a more appropriate and higher grade route available.

Freight Policy No. 2

Buckinghamshire County Council will continue to use width and weight restrictions as a freight management tool where appropriate. However Buckinghamshire County Council will be mindful of the limits of using width and weight restrictions.

4.3 Freight Quality Partnership

Residents told us that they wanted to have the opportunity to work with hauliers, Buckinghamshire County Council, Police and other partners to work together on finding the most appropriate routes for HGVs.

Freight Quality Partnerships (FQPs) are a means for local government, the local community, businesses, freight operators, environmental groups and other interested stakeholders to work together to address specific freight transport problems. They provide a forum to achieve best practice in environmentally sensitive, economic, safe and efficient freight transport. They aim to develop an understanding of freight distribution issues and problems and to promote constructive solutions, that reconcile the need for access to goods and services with local environmental and social concerns. There is no 'standard' type of FQP; they can take different forms and address many different issues as it appropriate at the level they serve. A FQP can be seen as the 'Big Society' in action with Buckinghamshire County Council encouraging people to take an active role in their communities by supporting the work local FQPs do.

In order to ensure that HGVs and LGVs are able to use our road network safely to improve efficiency and to lessen the impact of freight on the roads and residents of Buckinghamshire it is essential that we work in partnership with stakeholder groups on a number of levels:

- With hauliers and the representatives associations (such as the Freight Transport Association and Road Haulage Association) to ascertain needs for appropriate routing, lorry parking and rest stops;
- With neighbouring authorities to ensure continuity of the primacy of roads, particularly cross boundary issues associated with appropriate routing off the inter urban strategic corridor;
- With individual businesses, business associations and town centre managers to ensure that their servicing and delivery needs are met in the most appropriate way;
- With the wider local community and environmental groups to ensure that concerns regarding HGV movements and parking are heard and where possible acted upon
- With Thames Valley Police who is responsible for enforcing restrictions
- With District Councils to ensure future developments can be supplied as sustainably as possible; and

- With Satellite Navigation (SatNav) operators and the Ordnance Survey to ensure as far as possible that correct information regarding the inter urban strategic corridor and any restrictions in place are conveyed to drivers safely via sat nav.

An attempt to establish a FQP was last made in 2004, unfortunately there was insufficient interest from key parties for it to become established. It is hoped that by providing a strategy framework first, this will provide a better chance for a FQP to be established.

Many transport challenges, including those associated with freight, are specific to a given locality. Buckinghamshire County Council recognises that the best forum to address these challenges can often be at the local level by the community that is affected. As such Buckinghamshire Council will support the formation of FQPs at a local level (particularly at the Local Area Forum level).

Freight Policy No. 3

Buckinghamshire County Council will facilitate and support the setting up of local FQPs to enable better partnership working between all interested parties.

4.4 Goods vehicle operators licences

Residents told us that they would like Buckinghamshire County Council to object to new goods vehicle operator licences being issued

Goods vehicle operator licensing is a system of licensing aimed at ensuring the safe and proper use of goods vehicles and the protection of the environment around operating centres (ie. the place where an operator normally keeps his/her vehicles when they are not being used). Most users of commercial vehicles that weigh over 3.5 tonnes require a licence. A licence will authorise an operator to use up to a maximum total number of motor vehicles and trailers, and to use a specific operating centre or centres. The Council is regularly asked to object to the issuing of licenses however there are limitations on the Council, as a Statutory Objector, on what grounds can be objected on. This section will explain the process of issuing the licenses and explain the Transport Authority's powers within the process.

Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing is a system administered by the Traffic Commissioner at the Department for Transport to regulate companies and individuals operating goods vehicles.

In order to obtain a licence an applicant must meet a number of criteria:

- That they are a fit (competent) person to run the operation and are of good repute;
- That they have satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure that the rules governing drivers' hours and the overloading of vehicles are obeyed;
- That they have a suitable Operating Centre in which to keep the vehicles when they are not in use. (i.e. that it is large enough to accommodate the number of vehicles and trailers stated and that they can enter and leave in forward gear);
- That they have adequate facilities and arrangements for maintaining the authorised vehicles in a fit and serviceable state; and
- That they have adequate finance.

If it is considered that the applicant or the Operating Centre fails to meet any of these stated criteria a formal objection can be made by a Statutory Objector. The following organisations (Statutory Objectors) have a Statutory Right to object to an application for a (new) goods vehicle operating licence or an application to vary a licence once issued:

- A Chief Officer of Police
- A Local Authority (a County Council or District Council but NOT a Parish Council)
- A Planning Authority
- The Freight Transport Association, The Road Haulage Association and The British Association of Removers
- The General and Municipal Workers Union, The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, The Transport and General Workers Union, The Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers and The United Road Transport Union

Individuals who feel they will be affected by the use of the Operating Centre may make a representation against the issuing of a licence. However in order for it to be accepted it should generally be from an owner or occupier of land in the vicinity of the Operating Centre and can only be made on environmental grounds.

If objections have been received the Traffic Commissioner will decide whether there is sufficient evidence to make a decision or whether to hold a Public Inquiry to hear evidence from all parties (objector(s) and applicant) before reaching a decision.

Formal objections are generally made by Local Authorities on one of two grounds:

- That the applicant is not a fit (competent) person to run the operation and/or of good repute. For example, where the local authority has previously successfully prosecuted the applicant for breaches of planning legislation, waste disposal, and for trade descriptions. The Police may also object if the applicant has more than one unspent conviction for serious criminal offences or repeated convictions for road traffic offences.
- That the Operating Centre is not suitable to keep the vehicles when not in use., for example if it is too small to accommodate the number of vehicles and trailers, that there is insufficient room for a turning area, or that the access point where it connects to the public highway is unsafe.

Alternatively an objection can be lodged on environmental grounds if it is felt that the use of the Operating Centre would result in environmental harm. Factors which are taken into consideration are:

- Noise
- Hours of operation
- Fumes
- Pollution
- Vibration
- Visual Intrusion

However it should be noted that such objections are usually put forward by the District Councils or local residents. The County Council, as highway authority, would not normally use its Statutory Powers of Objection on these grounds.

The fact that the Operating Centre may contravene planning or highways legislation is not regarded by the Traffic Commissioner as sufficient reason to refuse an application. In such cases it is felt that action to restrict or control the use could or should be taken under the relevant legislation.

The Traffic Commissioner takes the view that it is the Highway Authority's (i.e. Buckinghamshire County Council's) responsibility to maintain the road and ensure that it is capable of carrying the vehicles that are entitled to use it. Under planning legislation the Highway Authority can request improvements to be made to the local road network as part of the planning application process. Unfortunately there is no similar provision under the Goods Vehicle Operators Licence.

Similarly the Traffic Commissioner does not take account of whether the site has planning consent. The Commissioner would take the view that it was a matter for the local planning authority (usually the District Council) to pursue under the Planning Legislation.

Freight Policy No. 4

Buckinghamshire County Council will lobby Central Government to alter legislation to improve the links between goods vehicle operator licensing system and planning legislation therefore putting the onus on those applying for the license to demonstrate the suitability of the surrounding road network and location of the operating centre for the number of motor vehicles they are licensing.

Freight Policy No. 5

Buckinghamshire County Council will continue to work with planning authorities to apply pragmatic approaches to tackle the issue of Goods Vehicle Operator Licences recognising the limited influence current legislation allows.

4.5 Buckinghamshire Freight Routing Network; Congestion, Signage, Sat Navs and Parking

Businesses tell us that they wanted a freight routing network to stop HGVs using inappropriate country lanes and residential streets as 'rat runs'

The routing of HGVs is important because of the impact they have on the areas that they travel through. The impact that HGVs have on both the urban and rural road network and environment falls generally into three categories:

- Environmental impact (including noise levels, vibration, air pollution)
- Hazards (including personal injury collisions, speed of lorries, impact damage to building and structure, 'weight' damage to the highway , overloading and insecure Loads)
- Nuisance and congestion (including visual obstruction and intrusion and congestion)

Highway Agency roads such as the M25, M4 and M40 carry the vast majority of the freight traffic though the County. HGV through traffic does use the County's roads, however it is HGVs that are either starting their journeys (e.g picking up goods) or finishing their

journeys in Buckinghamshire (delivering goods) that can put the most pressure on parts of the County's network.

The principles suggested by the Network Hierarchy Reference Document propose that the nature of the key routes through Buckinghamshire makes HGV routes almost self selecting; HGVs will be encouraged to use those roads best suited for their size. Typically that will be the Strategic Inter Urban corridors and other primary routes for through traffic. Figure 4 outlines the strategic inter-urban corridors. The Network Hierarchy Reference Document provides more detail on the make up of the County's roads and those roads that are part of the Strategic Inter Urban Route and the Primary Road network.

Much of the freight traffic on the County's roads is 'local traffic'. In other words a location within Buckinghamshire is the start or end destination for the freight. Exceptions to this are when the destination (or start point) is a location that is close to the county's border such as neighbouring authorities. There is also an exception of when there is a diversion from one of the motorways onto county roads.

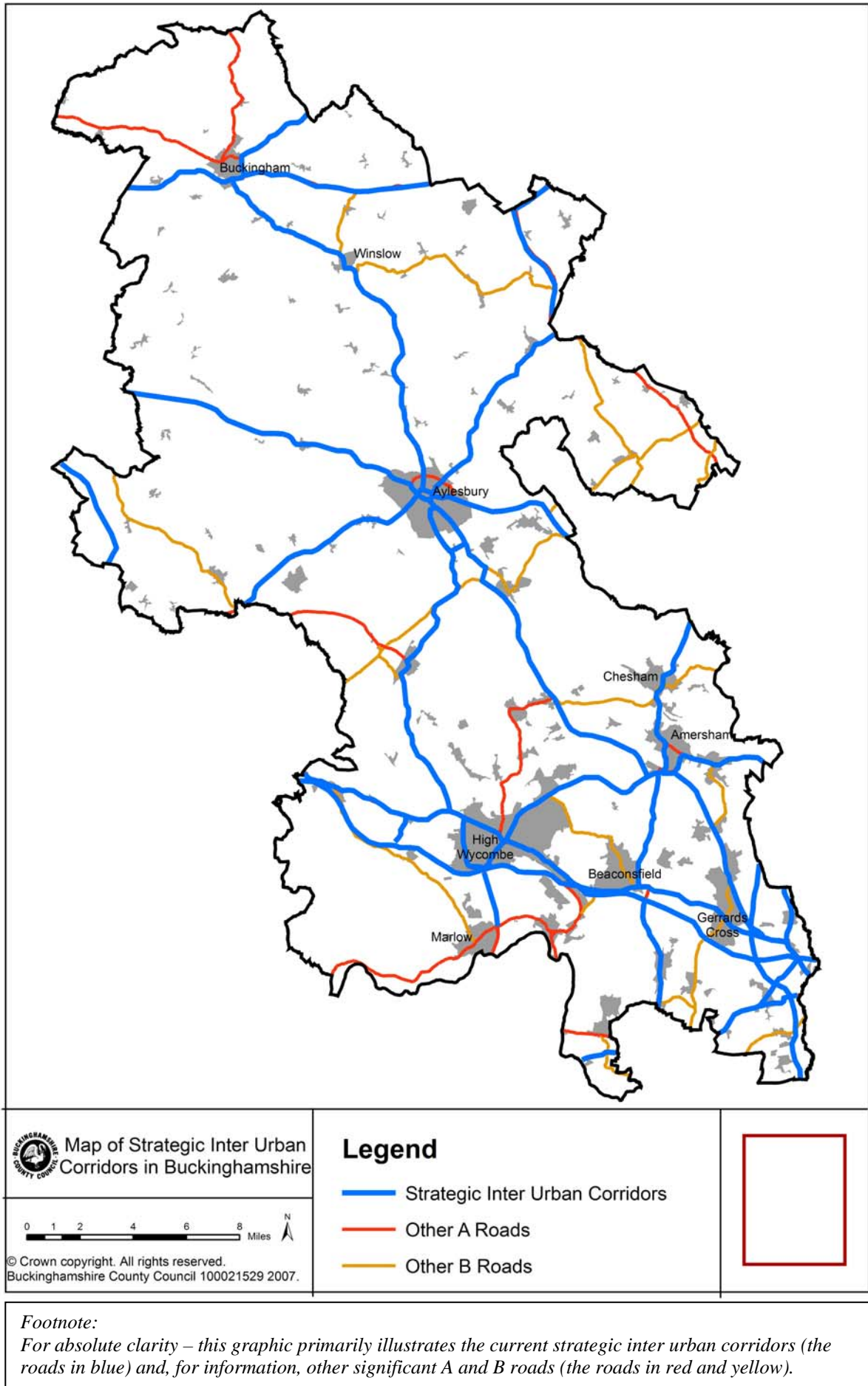
The majority of freight traffic already uses the strategic inter urban corridors to pass through the rural areas. In the interests of the continued well being of the local economy some HGVs have to access rural areas for the local collection and delivery of goods. Unfortunately such vehicles, particularly the larger HGVs are not compatible with the character and scale of country roads and some residential urban roads and can be seen as intrusive by some people.

HGVs should:

- Travel on motorways and main roads;
- Leave/join motorways/main roads at the nearest junction;
- Access that junction using the nearest main road providing it is a suitable route;
- Not use less suitable local roads where there are main roads available that offer a suitable route and;
- Use the best road available for local trips.

Measures to restrict lorries from using the Strategic Inter Urban corridors will not be proposed or supported where they force lorries to use less suitable roads. The nature of smaller rural roads, means that to negotiate them effectively there has to be a greater amount of breaking and gear changing than on main roads. Gear changing, and the resultant speeding up after breaking, uses more fuel than if driving at a constant speed and at a constant gear. Often HGV drivers would prefer not to use rural roads because of the increased fuel usage and the impact that has on profit margins. Part of the strategy must therefore address making it easier for HGV drivers to stay on the main road network for as long as possible.

Figure 4 – Map of strategic inter urban corridors



Methods of managing the routing of HGVs:

- Reduce congestion to provide a inter urban corridor road network that allows traffic to flow freely.
- Signage – clear signage of the inter urban corridor would help drivers navigate their way though Buckinghamshire. This implies providing signs to key locations such as industrial estates.
- Working with SatNav and Ordnance Survey so that they have the most up to date information on which roads are not suitable for HGVs.
- Influence the Department for Transport to regulate the types of SatNav products.
- Provide information for HGV drivers and haulage companies through FQP and map on the internet of prohibitive routes
- Weight restrictions can be useful in certain circumstances, however there are limitations to their usefulness.
- Working nationally and regionally to provide a national freight routing map

Congestion

Hauliers told us they wanted less congestion on the roads so that they did not have to take detours onto less suitable routes

Congestion can exacerbate issues with HGVs. Congestion 'hot spots' can lead to HGVs 'rat running' though villages and using inappropriate routes to avoid the inevitable cost to time that congestion produces. Congestion can also be caused by freight vehicles (HGVs) parking on narrow lanes while loading/delivering can block the lanes up. Tackling congestion was central to both the first and second Local Transport Plans and is a pertinent feature of LTP3 especially as there is an economic cost of congestion to the County. Buckinghamshire has had significant success in both addressing the causes of congestion and achieving change in travel patterns. However there is an awareness that some parts of the strategic road network, particularly the main routes into and out of the major population centres continue to experience high levels of peak time congestion. Journey time reliability is key to the economical movement of goods, projects such as the Urban Traffic Management Centre (UTMC) scheme work towards provide better traffic management and monitoring capabilities providing road users with up to date information through the web, mobile phones, public information screens and variable message signs to increase journey time reliability.

Freight Policy No. 6
Buckinghamshire County Council will continue to give tackling congestion a priority in the work that it does. This is an important part of the *Thriving Economy and Sustainable Environment* themes within LTP3

Signage



Roads that are on the Primary Route Network (PRN) are identified by green backed traffic signs. PRN roads make up a substantial amount of the inter urban corridor network. Other roads on the inter urban

corridor network are not necessarily signed to indicate this. It is important that there is accessible and appropriate information (ie signage) to provide guidance to HGV drivers on the most appropriate route for them to use. Buckinghamshire County Council is already in talks with the Department of Transport on developing and piloting signs that can be understood more clearly by HGV drivers with a limited understanding of English. As such the Buckinghamshire County Council Signage Strategy will provide detail about the process of how the inter urban strategic routes shall be signed.

Freight Policy No. 7

Buckinghamshire County Council will develop distinctive, consistent and Department for Transport approved signing that directs HGVs onto the strategic inter urban corridors and onto the most appropriate route once off the strategic inter urban corridor.

SatNavs

SatNavs can only be as good as the information provided for them. As such Buckinghamshire County Council is proactively working with SatNav mapping companies and the Ordnance Survey (OS) to enable SatNavs to have the most up to date information on prohibitive routes. This work will not produce immediate results as the SatNav mapping companies will have to update their maps once the information is provided to them in an accessible format. It is then reliant on the SatNav providers to refresh their information from the mapping companies. In the mean time concerned residents are able to access the following websites to inform them of roads with HGV prohibitions:

<http://www.teleatlas.com/ForConsumers/MapFeedback/index.htm>

<https://mapreporter.navteq.com/>

Buckinghamshire County Council will have the data available on both the County Council 's website and for the SatNav mapping companies in 2011. This will enable the SatNav mapping companies to refresh their maps with the most recent data. In the mean time The County Council is able to influence freight routes by the use of traffic signs and the map of the inter urban corridor network. Buckinghamshire County Council will continue to influence the Department for Transport in regulating the use of SatNavs which operate using dynamic data updates.

Buckinghamshire County Council is also looking to progress the Elgin programme, this is a private sector initiative that when fully functioning will seek to provide a feed of all road works, temporary restrictions and events in a particular region to SatNavs. This would provide real time information to HGV drivers and possibly provide Local Authorities with an effective way of influencing the routing of through traffic.

Freight Policy No.8

Buckinghamshire County Council will continue to work with the SatNav companies to give them the most up to date information. An interactive map will be up on the Council's website in 2011 which HGV drivers and the public will be able to access for information on prohibited routes.

Freight Policy No. 9

Buckinghamshire County Council will investigate the value of providing a form for concerned residents co-ordinated by local communities, to log particular incidents connected to HGVs.

Parking

Competing demands for road space can result in areas of heavy parking, delivery vehicles being unable to load or unload and this can have a detrimental affect on the free movement of traffic. When these areas are identified they will be considered during the Civil Enforcement Area reviews.

The solution to loading difficulties tends to be through a Traffic Regulation Order that implements loading bans and loading bays. The Traffic Regulation Order will seek to address delivery access to aid businesses, allow the free movement of traffic and to ensure safety.

In some locations waiting restrictions may be considered to allow freight to move safely and freely. Again these issues can be considered during the Civil Enforcement Area Reviews.

Overnight HGV Parking is an issue in some locations and should not take place in residential roads or in areas where safety is compromised or where there are inadequate services exist for drivers to use.

Freight Policy No. 10

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with District Councils, Parish Councils and local communities to restrict HGV parking where appropriate.

Freight Policy No. 11

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with the Highways Agency, the planning authorities and freight companies to find appropriate places for overnight parking for HGVs.

4.6 Land use planning

The District Councils are the planning authorities for Buckinghamshire. This means that they form policy over the development within their boundaries. Any development will mean an increase in freight. This may be on a temporary basis such as the construction phase of a new housing development, or a more permanent increase in freight movements such as to a new supermarket that needs to be serviced by HGVs.

Freight Policy No. 12

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with the planning authorities and developers to ensure that freight movements connected to new developments are considered as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The findings of the EIA will then influence the planning authority to consider the imposition as appropriate of conditions for planning consent the on timing, number, and routing of HGVs.

The County Council can influence distribution activity through land use planning and the development control process. In particular though travel plans and planning obligations, thereby encouraging development and distribution activity to locate in suitable locations such as encouraging use of alternative modes of transport, encouraging economic

development that has low goods movement requirements, improving roadside facilities and promoting local distribution parks for regeneration and employment purposes.

The term 'Brownfield' site refers to land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure that has become vacant, underused or derelict and has the potential for redevelopment. This can include redundant airfields, and places such as farm yards where sheds and barns can be classed as permanent structures. Small industrial parks can spring up where farms have diversified or larger industrial estates are now where there was once a redundant airfield. These can have an effect on the transport network and even the smallest industrial park in a rural area may disproportionately increase the amount of freight. The County Council will work with the planning authorities to further the sustainable development of Brownfield sites, promoting sustainable methods of distribution to and from the sites.

Freight Policy No.13

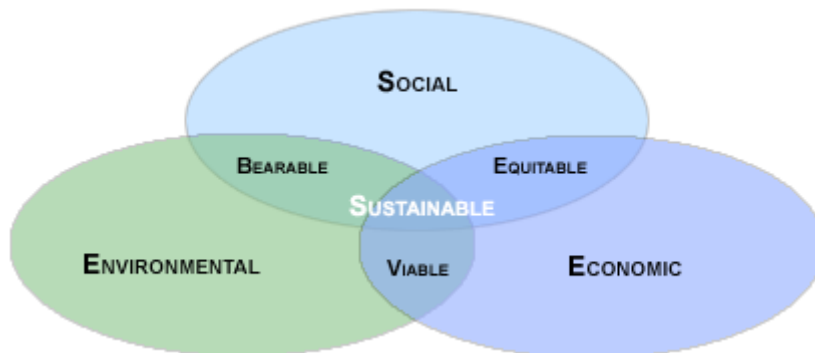
Buckinghamshire County Council will work with neighbouring authorities to provide consistency in land planning policy, access and supply of materials to future developments, road classifications and weight restrictions.

4.7 Sustainable Distribution

Residents told us that they wanted fewer HGVs (and the emissions, noise and vibrations they can produce) on Buckinghamshire's roads

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with freight operators and logistics companies to enable them to work in a more sustainable way. The encouragement of freight to use rail and water as an alternative to road would be environmentally less damaging in terms of reducing the length of road-based freight journeys on the County's roads, particularly through sensitive rural and residential areas, although it should be noted that most journeys would need to start or end with road based movement. This encouragement may be through the FQP (such as though a community lead education programme), but may also be through the planning process. Improved vehicle utilisation resulting from better distribution techniques and fleet management will lead to major improvements in vehicle efficiency and productivity.

Figure 5. The Three Elements of Sustainable Distribution²⁰



²⁰ Source: IGD Research 2008

Examples of best practice in Sustainable Distribution and transport include:

- Vehicle Developments: Engine Specifications / Trailer Design / Greater Capacity Vehicles
- Alternative Fuels: Natural Gas / Bio-fuel / Electricity / Hybrid / Parallel Hybrid
- Technology and Operational Processes Vehicle Telematics / Driver Training / Vehicle Maintenance
- Modal Shift/ Inter modality
- Transport Collaboration

Freight Facilities Grant

Currently under review through the Comprehensive Spending Review process, the Freight Facilities Grant (FFG) is a Department for Transport scheme designed to help transfer freight off the roads by increasing the amount of freight transported by rail and water in the UK. The capital grant helps to offset the capital cost of creating new freight-handling facilities and improving and investing in the rehabilitation of existing ones. At the point of publication the FFG scheme had been suspended to new applicants.

Rail

Rail transport is not 'emission free' although it does generate less emissions than road transport. Buckinghamshire's rail network is almost exclusively diesel operated and diesel does cause pollution. However, overall emissions from trains account for less than 1% of the UK total air emissions. Diesel train emissions should gradually reduce as older rolling stock is replaced with new trains or refurbished more efficient engines.

As already indicated in the strategy freight can be increased by construction. Where appropriate there is potential for moving construction traffic to rail freight to minimise the increase of HGVs on the County's roads.

East West rail will provide capacity for one freight train path per hour on both branches (the Aylesbury spur and the main Oxford/Bletchley line), therefore preserving the ability to carry freight on this redeveloped line. In term of long distance freight East West Rail will be on the Strategic Rail Freight Network.

Road- to-Rail Transshipment

Making the physical connection between rail and road means having interchange facilities where freight can be changed between modes. There is potential for road/rail interchange at the proposed Slough International Freight Exchange (SIFE site close to the junction of the M4 and M25 at Colnbrook). However there are a number of potential transport and planning implications for the southern part of Buckinghamshire which might result from not only the construction of the project but also the 'honey pot' affect of having a freight distribution centre very close to the Buckinghamshire border. This could offset some of the wider benefits of diverting long distance freight movements from road to rail. As such the County Council's position on this development will need to be developed.

Water borne traffic



The County Council supports water borne freight or commercial activities where these will contribute to the wealth of the County without having a detrimental effect on the environment

Neither the River Thames nor the Grand Union Canal offer a significant prospect of taking freight off Buckinghamshire roads. Utilisation of the waterways is generally only viable where freight to be moved is located adjacent to the canal, such as gravel beds and where the destination is also very near to the canal or river. However, we have encouraged the use of the Grand Union Canal for the transport of sand and gravel from the south of the County. The Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation Report proposes 'existing rail depots and wharves used in the transportation of waste or minerals, and other sites with the potential for such a use, should be safeguarded in order to keep down the need to extract primary minerals from within the county, and to encourage these more sustainable methods of transport.'²¹

Freight Policy No. 14

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with freight operators and logistics companies to enable them to work in a more sustainable way including alternative methods of haulage where appropriate.

Encouraging better HGV driving practises

By encouraging better driving practices by HGV drivers there is not only the effect of decreasing the operators' fuel bill, but there is the knock on effect of the driving being more environmentally friendly. Forward planning helps to reduce excessive gear changes, as such it is worthwhile for the HGV to stay on routes that require less gear changes (such as straight primary routes) than on windy rural roads. Another example is that the use of constant speeds on motorways and dual carriageways will enable full use of cruise control leading to less gear changes. This will result in a safer, more consistent and more economical drive. Wear and tear on the engine and running gear will be reduced and the vehicle will be able to run at its most economical rate.

Freight Policy No.15

Buckinghamshire County Council will work with FQPs, the Freight Transport Association and Freight Best Practice to encourage and enable drivers to pursue better driving techniques.

²¹

http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/assets/content/bcc/docs/strategic_planning/waste_mineral_plans/cs_po_main_document.pdf
accessed on 22/09/10

5. Way Forward

The movement of freight from, through and within Buckinghamshire is a vital part of the demand on the County's network. Freight transport is part of the every day life of every person: everything we use and consume is normally delivered to us through a complex chain of movements from raw materials to the final point of use. The delivery of freight is vital for the local economy to thrive and grow. Set against this are the environmental concerns and perceived road safety risks resulting from passage of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs). There is recognition that the impact of freight movement does effect the quality of life for some residents - noise, odour, vibration, air quality - if not managed correctly.

Using the policies outlined in this strategy should result in the localised freight issues being resolved at a local level. This is through the Business Planning Process for the Local Area teams and the Local Area Forum system. However 'centre-led' initiatives, such as the proactive work with the SatNav companies, have also been outlined in this Strategy.

There are limited powers that the County Council can bring to bear to influence the movement of freight in the County. Buckinghamshire County Council will use the tools and policies within this strategy to effectively manage freight traffic within the County, minimise negative impacts where possible.

Moving forward the role of the community will increase in line with the Government's "Big Society". This will be done through the Local Area Forums and devolved budgets. The County Council will continue to work with partners such as the District Councils for land use planning, initiatives and the Highways Agency.

This strategy is aligned to the emerging Bucks LTP3 and will influence and steer the works programme developed by Buckinghamshire County Council on an annual basis. Customer feedback key through surveys to continue to influence the direction of travel as does the on going feedback from local communities.

Appendix 1

Policy Context

This section presents an overview of the national and local policies that are most relevant to freight. Understanding the connectivity of differing policies and their place in society enables this strategy to demonstrate a robust decision making process for the future of freight in Buckinghamshire.

Traffic Management Obligations

The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on highway authorities to manage their networks to secure a safe and expeditious movement of all traffic. Authorities are expected to avoid, reduce or minimise congestion or disruption by maximising the use of the existing network, ensuring that roads are used more efficiently and making the best use of resources.

'The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 ' White Paper July 2004

In 'The Future of Transport' White Paper, the Government outlines its key aims for the freight industry. These are: "to facilitate the continuing development of a competitive and efficient freight sector, while reducing the impact that moving freight has on congestion and the environment." To achieve these aims the document signals an intention to move towards a mode-neutral basis for distributing funding in support of sustainable distribution. The main grants are for rail and water so that freight traffic is transferred to these modes. However, there has also been a new emphasis on the promotion of more efficient road haulage, reflecting the dominance of road freight.

The White Paper recognises that regulation and enforcement are required in order to protect society, but emphasises that this must be done without stifling business. Local Authorities are encouraged to think about how the regulatory powers that relate to freight transport can be coordinated to make life easier for businesses, whilst protecting the interests of local people

The Stern Review 2006

The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change was released in October 2006 and discusses the effect of climate change and global warming on the world economy.

The Review examines the evidence on the economic impacts of climate change itself, and explores the economic of stabilising greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. The Review also considers the complex policy challenges involved in managing the transition to a low-carbon economy and in ensuring that societies can adapt to the consequences of climate change that can no longer be avoided .

Its main conclusion was that the benefits of strong, early action on climate change considerably outweigh the costs. It proposes that 1% of global gross domestic product (GDP) per annum is required to be invested in order to avoid the worst effects of climate change, and that failure to do so could risk global GDP being up to twenty percent lower than it otherwise might be. In June 2008 Stern increased the estimate to 2% of GDP to account for faster than expected climate change.

The Eddington Transport Study (2006)

The Eddington Transport Study is an examination of the impact of transport decisions on the economy and the environment of the United Kingdom, with recommendations on how the transport network should be modernised

The study suggests that increasing congestion damages the UK economic competitiveness. It concludes that the UK's transport network is broadly adequate, connecting the right places and as such the government should concentrate on easing congestion at key points in the existing network. The study suggests that parts of the network that are vital to economic success should receive investment and that congested and growing cities should be prioritised, as should inter-urban corridors and ports and airports. Their full cost to the environment, including their contribution to climate change, should be paid by all modes of transport.

Sustainable Distribution: a strategy (March 1999)

This document fulfils the Government's commitment in the White Paper "A New Deal for Transport" to set out a comprehensive, integrated strategy for the sustainable distribution of goods and services in the UK. This paper encompasses supply chain management or "logistics" as well as all modes of transport. The aim of a sustainable distribution strategy is to ensure that the future development of the distribution industry does not compromise the future needs of our society, economy and environment.

The Government's objectives are to:

- improve the efficiency of distribution;
- minimise congestion;
- make better use of transport infrastructure;
- minimise pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- manage development pressures on the landscape - both natural and man-made;
- reduce noise and disturbance from freight movements; and
- reduce the number of accidents, injuries and cases of ill-health associated with freight movement.

Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG 13)

PPG 13 provides Local Authorities with planning policy guidance on transport. The purpose of the guidance is to integrate planning and transport at national, strategic and local levels. It encourages Local Authorities to identify and protect sites that can be used to develop infrastructure to facilitate the movement of freight. This may involve major freight interchanges.

The guidance also acknowledges the issue of delivery hour restrictions which apply to residential areas and town centers. These are often put in place due to concerns of disturbance for residents but may have adverse impacts due to exacerbating congestion at peak times, increasing local pollution and discouraging investment in central urban areas. The guidance suggests that there needs to be a balance between the interests of local residents and those of the wider community.

The wider impacts of local authorities' decision making process should also be accounted for. This relates to issues such as parking, loading, planning, weight limits and environmental health.

PPG 13 encourages Local Authorities, freight operators, businesses and developers to work together within the context of the Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) in order to agree on issues such as lorry routes, loading and unloading facilities, reducing vehicle delivery noise levels and enabling a more efficient and sustainable approach to deliveries in sensitive locations.

The Aviation White Paper 2003

This White Paper provides a strategic framework for the development of airport capacity in the UK over the next 30 years against the wider context of the air transport sector. As over 2.1 million tonnes of freight are lifted every year, the future policy decisions growing aviation industry are vitally important. Although Buckinghamshire does not have an airport within the County, the effects of freight and aviation are still very important because of the proximity of Heathrow and Luton to the County boundary. Freight both travels through the county to reach Heathrow but any development of the Airport will affect the County.

Growth

All Districts within Buckinghamshire have to achieve a certain amount residential development by 2026. However there will be a concentrated amount of development in Aylesbury Vale which was identified in the South East Plan as part of the Milton Keynes South Midlands sub-region as a growth area. Aylesbury was forecast to grow by 16,800 houses. The urban extension of Milton Keynes to the south west of the city may mean that there is an extra 5,390 houses to be built in north Aylesbury Vale. The transport impacts of this large scale development would have to be carefully managed and substantial investment in new highway and public infrastructure will be required to avoid worsening congestion and gridlock.

Neighbouring Authorities

Many of Buckinghamshire's neighbouring authorities already have draft (eg Slough) or adopted freight strategies (eg Milton Keynes and Transport for London). These strategies have been taken into consideration during the development of this document.

The Second Local Transport Plan, 2006-2011

The 20 year vision for the Local Transport Plan 3 is 'To secure the strategic and local transport infrastructure and services to sustainably develop the local economy; to facilitate population growth; and improve accessibility and social inclusion; whilst balancing free, safe and efficient movement of people and goods with protection of the environment'.

Supporting this overall aim LTP2 identifies 4 cross cutting themes:

- Transport growth and the economy
- Transport, customer priorities and meeting personal access needs
- Transport and the environment
- Transport and the development of safe, strong and healthy communities

Network Hierarchy

The Network Hierarchy is a policy document that, without seeking to be a design guide, brings together into one reference point a summary of the key policies and functions of the transport network in Buckinghamshire. The Network Hierarchy sits alongside the Freight Strategy by indicating some key principles and the preferred most suitable routes for freight vehicles to use.