

Greenway Strategy for South Derbyshire District

SECTION 2: Policy and Strategic Context

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This chapter identifies the national, regional and local policy context relevant to the development of a network of Greenways in the District of South Derbyshire. There are a significant number of policies and existing plans and strategies that support the principles of easy access traffic-free routes for both leisure and transport purposes. This is therefore not a definitive list but a compilation of some of the most pertinent references.

2.2 National government policies and guidance

2.2.1 National government policies, guidance and targets affect the direction of Local government services and their delivery. Those listed below provide the relevant context for the development of easy access by Greenway networks.

Planning Policy Guidance (PPG's)

2.2.2 Central Government provides a framework for encouraging development of this type through several of the Planning Policy Guidance Notes promoted by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This guidance informs Regional Planning Policy and Local Authority's Structure and Local Plans to assist the provision of sustainable development across the country. Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs) set out the Government's policies on different aspects of planning. Local planning authorities must take their content into account in preparing their development plans. The guidance may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications and appeals.

2.2.3 The theme to encourage safe and easy access, particularly by walking and cycling is evident across many of the guidance notes. The promotion of accessibility to local facilities, service providers and attractions by other means than the car is particularly encouraged. Many of the government's national targets are supported by the promotion of Greenways, such as to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, to promote healthy living and well being, to encourage social inclusion, enable urban renaissance as well as rural renewal through the benefits of new tourism infrastructure. Some extracts and key principles from the most relevant guidance notes are shown below;

- *PPG 3 Housing Development 2000*
"Local planning authorities should seek to reduce car dependence by facilitating more walking and cycling..."
- *PPG 13 Transport 2002*
Walking and cycling are integral to the governments transport policy. Whether to access shops and services in town or to connect rural

areas and facilities, the provision of integrating walking and cycling facilities into the transport network crosses all planning disciplines. The guidance states;

“Our quality of life depends on transport and easy access to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services; we need a safe, efficient and integrated transport system to support a strong and prosperous economy. But the way we travel and the continued growth in road traffic is damaging our towns, harming our countryside and contributing to global warming. The objectives of this guidance are to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level to; promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and for moving freight; promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling; and reduce the need to travel, especially by car.”

- **PPG 17 Planning for open spaces, sport & recreation 2002**

“Open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people’s quality of life.”

“Rights of way are an important recreational facility, which local authorities should protect and enhance. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.”

- **PPG 21 Tourism 1992**

This guidance recognises the increasing economic significance of the tourist industry and the effects on the environment. The development of a greenway network will provide additional tourism infrastructure across South Derbyshire. The notes state;

“Tourism makes a major contribution to the national economy and to the prosperity of many cities, towns and rural areas. Its continuing growth generates a range of economic activity and new job opportunities. Because it often depends on a high quality environment, it can act as a positive force for environmental protection and enhancement.”

DfT The Future of Transport White Paper – A Network for 2030

2.2.4 In 2004 the government launched a new strategy for transport in the UK. Chapter 6 – Walking and cycling: A Positive Choice, recognises the need to provide safe and attractive quality walking and cycling environments, for workers, school children, mobility impaired groups and shoppers, and states;

“Walking and cycling offer a healthy and enjoyable alternative, particularly for short trips. We want to encourage more people to walk and cycle more often.”

DfT The Walking & Cycling Action Plan 2004

2.2.5 Further to The Future of Transport report above, this action plan highlights a collection of practical actions and good practice studies to support and encourage more walking and cycling in the UK. Actions allow for the strengthening of planning policy and development opportunities through the planning process, and promoting better transport planning by linking the Rights of Way Improvement Plan to the Local Transport Plan. Furthermore, the action plan details the following specific targets;

Action no.13: Better walking and cycling routes – promote quality infrastructure for existing and new routes

- Action no.14: *Crossings for pedestrians and cyclists – the Highways Agency is developing a Non-motorised User Crossings programme to reduce risk for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders*
- Action no.16: *Extending the National Cycle Network – working with Sustrans to extend existing networks and create links to schools*
- Action no.18: *Inland Waterways routes – DfT to work with British Waterways to consider how best to exploit the potential of canal and river towpaths to provide accessible routes for walking and cycling.*

Defra Waterways for Tomorrow 2000

2.2.6 Following on from the “New Deal for Transport” white paper 1998, Defra produced a new charter for waterways, entitled “Waterways for Tomorrow” in June 2000, to set out the proposals for the future of the inland waterways in England and Wales. The charter states;

“The Government wants to promote the inland waterways, encouraging a modern, integrated and sustainable approach to their use to protect and conserve a vital part of our national heritage. They wish to encourage their best and, where appropriate, innovative use, maximising the opportunities they offer for leisure and recreation; urban and rural regeneration; education; and freight transport.”

“Local Transport Plans will help ensure that the inland waterways are fully integrated with other transport-related policies such as those for freight, public transport, cycling and walking. There is more scope for the waterways to be used for public transport and we will support the introduction of passenger boat services.”

The Government's Approach - A vision for the inland waterways

“The inland waterways are an important asset for future generations to enjoy and the Government is keen to see them maintained and developed in a sustainable way so that they fulfil their social, economic and environmental potential. We want to ensure that the many benefits and opportunities they provide are used to the full.”

A New Role for Waterways – Recreation and Leisure

“Almost all the waterways system is used for leisure. This includes boating of all kinds; angling; sport; and informal recreation. Towpaths and other waterside paths provide local and long distance walking and cycle routes, and access to the countryside.”

2.3 Regional Policy and Strategies

The East Midlands Regional Economic Development Strategy (EMREDS)

- 2.3.1 The primary goal of the EMREDS is to develop a competitive region and sustainable communities and aims to develop the East Midlands as a Top 20 region through raising Gross National Product (GNP) and productivity.
- 2.3.2 Greenway development helps to deliver the rural action plan by developing rural infrastructure and providing the opportunity for Agricultural business to diversify into tourism, adding value to the tourism cluster business across the Sub-Region of South Derbyshire and the National Forest.
- 2.3.3 The creation of a network of cycleways is a key element of the Derbyshire Local Transport Plan which helps to deliver the transport needs of the Regional Economic Strategy.

The East Midlands Development Agency (Emda) Corporate Plan 2003-2006

2.3.4 Emda's proposed activities mesh with the challenges and targets described in the revised Regional Economic Strategy and have been developed with the principles of sustainable development. The overarching aims are to increase GDP and improve productivity. Emda's proposals include;

Forestry & Greening

- *We will work with partners including Sub-regional Strategic Partnerships (SSP's), to promote the economic benefits of greening across the region. As an example, GNP has identified a number of ways in which they can increase investment across the sub-region by improving green spaces. Examples of proposed projects include pocket parks, millennium gardens and access improvements to nature reserves.*
- *An underpinning theme of our site development programme is to create a high quality environment to attract investment.*

Transport

- *Improving accessibility in rural areas.*

Tourism & Culture

- *With SSPs, we will support the growth of the short break market and work to enhance the quality and experience of key brands such as ... Derbyshire and the Peak District. EMDA and other partners will also seek to develop products that will create better links between the regions rural and urban areas and will encourage people to disperse from towns and cities to enjoy the attractions of the region's rural areas.*
- *In supporting emerging brands and new products, we will encourage consideration of the potential environmental impact on local communities, particularly in relation to transport issues, pollution and urban renaissance.*
- *Actions undertaken by EMDA and its partners will seek to maintain and enhance the quality of the rural environment and to spread the benefits of tourism throughout rural communities.*

Rural Development

- *We will develop a more proactive and effective role in the strategic development of rural tourism following production of the Regional Tourism Strategy early in April 2003. Rural tourism will be an important source of new jobs in the countryside and we will seek to ensure the following priorities for action for rural tourism are included in the strategy:*
 - *More support for tourist attractions with the potential for job creation and growth*
 - *Greater emphasis on attracting business tourism*
 - *A clearer focus regarding the elements of rural tourism activity in SSP plans*
- *Emda will further promote agricultural diversification.*

2.3.5 Five core outputs have been identified to measure the impact of their expenditure to achieve the proposals, including;

- *Employment opportunities - creation/safeguarding of net jobs,*
- *Brownfield land - remediation/recycling hectares of brownfield land,*
- *Business performance - creation/attraction of new businesses,*
- *Education and skills - creation of learning opportunities and*
- *Investment benefiting deprived areas – leverage of private sector investment.*

2.3.6 The development of a Greenway network will help to deliver Emda's key aims and proposals by helping the local economy to adjust to 'new industry' through provision of a vital resource for sustainable tourism.

2.3.7 It will improve the tourism product of the sub-regional area, attract visitors to the area, generating further investment in the local economy and encourage the local rural economy to diversify into a more modern economy. This in turn benefits tourism business growth which can lead to new jobs by encouraging the expansion and development of new related business to cater for visitors using the new infrastructure for walking, cycling and horse riding. Such businesses might include the food and drink establishments, accommodation, retail outlets, stabling, short break or touring holiday companies, cycle hire, existing visitor attraction income generators, equestrian businesses, cycling businesses and walking related businesses.

2.3.8 The delivery of such networks often comprises removal of dereliction and renewal of brownfield sites, through the provision of high quality environments, landscape renewal and environmental improvement schemes that enhance the quality of business estates, tourism and heritage areas within the urban and rural communities.

Tourism Strategy for the East Midlands 2003-2010

2.3.9 The East Midlands Tourism Strategy, entitled Destination East Midlands has now been launched. It will steer development of the industry in the region through to 2010. The strategy aims to significantly increase the role of the tourism industry in the prosperity of the region. The two main targets are;

Target: To increase visitor value by encouraging more over-night stays and increase visitor spend by 2% by 2010.

Target: To provide an additional 15,000 new jobs in the region in the tourism sector by 2010.

2.3.10 Greenway networks provide infrastructure for the sustainable tourism market and helps to deliver the regional tourism strategy.

Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands 2000 – 2021

2.3.11 Regional Planning Guidance provides the broader framework for a region's development and environmental protection over a 15 to 20 year period. It sets the context for the preparation of the Structure Plans and Local Plans.

The East Midlands Regional Transport Strategy 2001

2.3.12 This is an integral part of the Regional Planning Guidance and sets the context for the Local Transport Plans.

On Trent Initiative 2005 – 2024

2.3.13 The OnTrent Initiative is a partnership project involving a wide range of public, voluntary and commercial organisations. The project is working to secure a sustainable balance between the natural and historic heritage, agriculture, commercial activity and development along the River Trent. The following extracts are relevant to this strategy.

Tourism: There is potential for enhancing the local economy through small leisure and tourism based initiatives along the Trent Valley corridor.

Opportunity 5.9b: To build on existing initiatives to develop sustainable

tourism opportunities in the Trent Valley.

Informal Recreation: The Trent and its banks are used for a variety of both formal and informal leisure and recreational activities along its length. Access to the countryside has the potential to provide recreation, health and relaxation benefits and makes an important contribution to quality of life for the public and visitors to the Trent Valley.

Opportunity 6.1g: Continuation of development of the Trent Valley Way.

The National Forest Strategy 2004 - 2014

2.3.14 The National Forest Strategy aims to meet the goals of the East Midlands Regional Economic Development Strategy and supports the development of multi-user trails throughout the forest area, shown by the following policies;

Sport & Recreation: The Forest aims to create a major new resource for sport and recreation that will appeal to local residents, day visitors and longer-staying visitors. It will provide a diverse range of high-quality recreation, public access and sporting experiences based upon outdoor activity. In so doing the Forest will make a significant contribution towards the Government's sustainability objective of 'a countryside for all to enjoy'.

Opportunities need to be explored to develop appropriate multi-use trails, where space and ground conditions permit. These should favour horse riders, cyclists and all abilities users. Derelict railway lines and canal towpaths have particular potential, as demonstrated by the Ashby Woulds Heritage Trail and Ashby Canal towpath. Routes through certain woodlands and by agreement across farmland will also be explored.

Action SR9: The NFC will work to co-ordinate the implementation of the Cycling Strategy

Action SR11: The NFC will encourage the development of multi-user trails.

Tourism: The Forest area is developing far quicker than predicted into a major, new tourism resource. In 2002 5 million visitors came to the area and visitor spending was £164m. Tourism is contributing significantly to economic regeneration and supports 4,500 jobs in the area. The aim is to create a new, national, tourism destination based upon substantial outdoor activity and a variety of indoor attractions. Existing tourism attractions will blend with new Forest attractions and a growing and changing network of new woodlands, trails and sport and recreation facilities.

Developing a comprehensive network of Forest trails and access linked to visitor accommodation and attractions will be high priority

Action T1: The Forest's tourism product will be developed around the themes offorest trails and access - expanding the network for walkers, cyclists, horse riders and disabled users.

The plan identifies several distinct tourism clusters of activity across the Forest, and recognises that within each cluster there is potential for further tourism development to complement and create links with existing attractions. The plan identifies existing and creating new forest trails within and between the tourism cluster areas. The clusters named as priority areas for tourism development in South Derbyshire include; Heart of the Forest, Melbourne Parklands & Reservoirs, Mease Farms and Woods and Trent Valley Water Park.

Action T10: The NFC will work with partners to promote the tourism clusters... as priority areas for tourism development.

The National Forest Cycling Strategy 2002

2.3.15 The National Forest Company have prepared a Cycling Strategy for the whole forest area, drawing on the existing Local Authority cycling strategies. Priority routes identified include several groupings of sites and attractions to be linked; these include two groupings relevant to South Derbyshire;

- *National Memorial Arboretum, Rosliston Forestry Centre, Conkers, Swadlincote Woodlands and Burton on Trent.*
- *Ashby, Calke, Staunton Harold, Melbourne, Foremark Reservoir*

2.4 Derbyshire County Council Policies, Plans & Strategies

2.4.1 The following county council plans and policies demonstrate the commitment by the authority to support and develop linear routes for non-motorised use to access facilities and the countryside.

Derby & Derbyshire Joint Structure Plan 2001

2.4.2 The Joint Structure Plan recognises the opportunities to develop easy access routes for people of all abilities through the General Development policies and more specifically;

- *Leisure & Tourism Policy 1:*
 - 7.29 *Provision will be made for leisure and tourism facilities that are; capable of being served by a range of transport modes...and are accessible to and provide opportunities for greater participation by all sections of the population.*
 - 7.30 *Where appropriate, leisure and tourism provision will be made in association with environmental improvement and conservation projects, including opportunities offered by redevelopment, land reclamation schemes, the cessation of mineral workings and the management and interpretation of archaeological and heritage sites.*
- *Leisure & Tourism Policy 2: Locational Principles*
 - 7.34 *Leisure and tourism facilities will be developed throughout Derbyshire...in the Trent Valley and Lower Derwent Valleyand in the National Forest.....*
- *Leisure & Tourism Policy 3: Provision of specific Recreational Facilities*
 - 7.39.1 *Provision will be made for.....The development of recreational cycle routes, bridleways and long-distance and circular walks where, especially where these would link settlements with existing facilities and the countryside, or make use of towpaths, disused railway lines and other linear features.*
- *Transport Policy 1: Reducing the Need to Travel*
 - 5.12.1 *New development will take into account the aim of reducing the need to travel. Priority will be given to public transport, walking and cycling, in order to increase the proportion of journeys undertaken by those modes of transport and to manage the demand for private car travel.*
- *Transport Policy 10: Cycling*
 - 5.48.1 *Provision will be made for a greater proportion of journeys to be made on cycles by....providing a network of cycle routes both on and off the highway. The provision of long distance cycle routes will be supported.*

- *Transport Policy 16: Disused Transport Routes*
5.69 *Proposals for the reclamation of suitable disused railway and canal facilities as public access routes for walking, cycling and horse riding will normally be supported where this does not preclude proposals for the re-establishment of the former use.*
- *Swadlincote Sub-Area*
26.27 *A cycle route is proposed which will connect Swadlincote with Burton-on-Trent and Ashby.*

DCC Council Plan 2003

2.4.3 The Council Plan sets the Authority's purpose and values, and describes the Vision Statement as; "To improve life for local people by delivering high quality services." To achieve this, ten goals with related objectives have been set to reflect issues of importance to local people and include;

Goal: Improve access to leisure, recreation, information, learning and culture

Objective: To promote sustainable recreational use of the countryside

Goal: Improve transport choice and safety

Objective: To encourage more journeys by public transport, cycling and walking

DCC Departmental Service Plan 2005/06

2.4.4 The service plan identifies what the Environmental Services Department will do to continue to deliver a high standard of services to contribute to the Council's vision and meet the goals and objectives of the Council Plan. It lists the service developments and new initiatives for the current year, which include developing the county-wide Greenway network and identifies specific schemes to achieve this.

Derby & Derbyshire Mineral Local Plan 2004

2.4.5 The Supplementary Planning Guidance on The After-Use of Sand & Gravel Sites in the Trent, Lower Derwent & Dove Valleys 2004 states;

"In the study area, an important consideration in reclaiming mineral sites will be the opportunities provided for the creating linkages to any existing or proposed recreational routes which cross the area, including.... Mickleover to Eggington Great Northern Greenway, The Midshires Way, The Trent and Mersey Canal Towpath...."

Principles for recreational after uses; Principle 6 states;

"On any site, or part site, where public access is to be allowed, the development should provide for; multi-user recreational routes (walking/cycling routes, bridleways) which, wherever possible, link to existing or proposed off-road routes or quiet roads, especially where these would create circular routes or links to longer distance routes to settlements, or create links to towpaths, disused railway lines or other linear features."

Derbyshire Local Transport Plan 2001-2006

2.4.6 Section 8.5.4 - Cycle Network, seeks to continue the implementation of the Cycleway Network (comprising all Greenway developments), and states;

"This network will provide links between and through major towns and villages seeking to encourage cycling as a safe and convenient alternative to the car."

Target: To deliver 50% of the identified proposed cycle network by 2006.

Derby Joint Area Local Transport Plan 2001-2006

2.4.7 The Derby Joint Area LTP Plan identifies that the local authorities are seeking to implement a strategic cycle network throughout the LTP Area which extends into South Derbyshire District, and offers a Cycle Delivery Plan specifying a range of initiatives to further develop cycling opportunities throughout the plan area, including;

- *Completing the Strategic Cycle Network by developing new and improving existing routes.*
- *Linking important destinations*
- *Ensuring the continuity of safe facilities*

2.4.8 The Cycle Network Preparation Pool identifies specific targeted routes and identifies a cycle route connecting Littleover, Sinfin and Stenson.

DCC Cycling Strategy 1995

2.4.9 The authority's Cycling Strategy is currently under revision as part of an integrated transport review. The current strategy splits the cycling policies into three aims. These and a corresponding policy are given below.

Aim 1: "To improve safety of cyclists"

Policy: "To develop safe cycle routes to and from schools."

Aim 2: "To encourage a growth in cycling."

Policy: "To facilitate and construct cycle facilities, networks and long distance paths."

Aim 3: "To improve access and facilities for cyclists"

Policy: "To provide cycle links between long-distance cycle paths and adjacent town centres."

DCC Countryside Management & Development Strategy 2004-2009

2.4.10 This Strategy guides the management and development work of the Countryside Service for a five year period and fits within the context of the Countryside Service Best Value Review Improvement Plan. It sets out the way ahead and identifies the following aim and objectives;

Aim 1: "Provide and improve countryside access opportunities for all sections of the community for a range of recreational, health, and sustainable transport purposes; including an easy to use public rights of way network."

Objective 1.8: "develop the Greenways network for the whole county promoting its use as a sustainable network for recreation, health, tourism and transport purposes."

Objective 1.9: "encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport throughout Derbyshire to access and enjoy the countryside, strengthening sustainable links to the countryside from urban areas."

2.5 Local Plans and Strategies

South Derbyshire District Council Local Plan 2003

2.5.1 Although no multi-user traffic-free routes are identified on the proposals map, the Revised Deposit Draft January 2003 states that the council wishes to encourage growth in walking and cycling as an alternative to car use and will

promote existing and new routes through development opportunities. Both existing and proposed routes identified in the SDDC Cycling Strategy network shall also be protected. It also states that disused railway lines can provide a valuable opportunity for the creation of linear routes for walking, cycling and horse riding and that a number of such routes in South Derbyshire are identified in the council's Cycling Strategy as forming part of the proposed network.

2.5.2 The following policies in the chapters 'Transport', 'Housing' and 'Leisure Recreation and Tourism' apply;

- **Policy T4: Cycling**

A: "Where a need is identified under Policy T1, the council will seek to negotiate provision by developers of measures to encourage access by cycle and contributions toward a high quality and continuous cycle route network throughout the district in accordance with the south derbyshire cycling strategy."

B: "Development proposals should not impair the coherence, directness, continuity, safety, attractiveness and comfort of existing routes used by cyclists and should not prejudice proposals for the establishment of new cycle routes."

- **Policy T7: Disused Railway Lines**

"Development which is likely to impair the continuity or restoration of disused railway lines for passenger or freight use or prejudice their use for walking, cycling or horse riding will not be permitted, except where it can be demonstrated that such a route will have no useful role to play in the future."

- **Policy H3: Woodville Woodlands Housing allocation**

"...the Council...will secure the following by either conditions or a legal agreement attached to the planning permission;

(IV) provision of appropriate infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport particularly linking to the existing facilities on high street."

- **Policy H5: Willington Power Station**

"...the council...will seek to secure the following via condition or legal agreement;

(II) provision of appropriate walking, cycling and public transport links in particular to the employment allocation and Willington railway station."

- **Policy H6: Site of former MOD Depot, Hilton**

".....A new legal agreement will be required in relation to the additional allocation to cover open space and recreational provision...."

- **Policy LRT2: Protection of identified sites for future recreational and leisure purposes.**

(i) land between meadow View Road, Newhall and the former Cadley Hill Railway.

(III) the former Derby and Sandiacre Canal from Swarkestone Lock to the District boundary at Cuttle Bridge.

South Derbyshire District Cycling Strategy 2001

2.5.3 This strategy was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the district council in March 2001. Policy 2: Cycle Network states

"A high quality, continuous route network will be provided for cyclists....to major local and inter-urban utility routes catering for significant travel destinations such as employment areas, schools, retail centres, public transport interchanges, leisure

facilities including links to National Forest recreation and tourist facilities, and hospitals.”

“Disused railway track beds should be protected use as multi-user routes. Routes should be multi-user, except where space prohibits this.”

South Derbyshire District Draft Community Strategy 2004

- 2.5.4 The Local Government Act 2000 places a duty on Local Authorities to produce a Community Strategy to improve economic, social and environmental well being. They reflect issues important to local communities and establish a framework for delivering shared priorities. The South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership was established in 2003 and has set 6 themes and listed possible actions against them. Those relevant to this strategy include;

*Theme 4: A Sustainable Environment
Possible Action: “Improve walking and cycling routes”*

*Theme 5: Life Long Learning
Possible Action: “Improving the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes”*

Draft Get Active in the Forest – Development Plan 2004

- 2.5.5 Rosliston Forestry Centre has prepared the draft plan in conjunction with a number of partners and stakeholders to develop outdoor activity within South Derbyshire and the National Forest, based at the centre.
- 2.5.6 The Development Plan supports the opportunities to develop walking, cycling and horse riding within the forest and identifies the development of multi-user trails as a target action.

NW Leicestershire Northern Parishes Cycling Network 2002

- 2.5.7 Prepared by Sustrans for NW Leicestershire District Council, this plan identified a series of proposed cycle routes around the “Eye of the Midlands” development area around Kegworth, Castle Donnington and the East Midlands Airport. It also identifies potential connections into South Derbyshire District. Whilst the project looks mainly towards highway improvements, some are relevant to the South Derbyshire Greenway network; in particular the plan recognises local support for two River Trent crossings for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, at Kings Mills to connect Donnington to Weston-on-Trent and Long Horse Bridge to continue the multi-user access of the Midshires Way northwards into Derbyshire. The plan also identifies the Dark Dale bridleway following the Leicestershire/Derbyshire boundary past the Melbourne Parks, as a potential cycle route.