

## Chapter 8 Transport, Movement and Accessibility

### 8.0 Aim

To promote and facilitate the use of sustainable and smarter travel patterns, which include alternative modes of transport that are properly integrated together and support the development of a safer, more efficient transport system for Tullamore. Such a transport system will include integrated improvements to the road network, public transport network, cycleways and pedestrian ways.

### 8.1 Context

#### 8.1.1 National Development Plan 2007- 2013 and Transport 21

The *National Development Plan 2007-2013* (NDP) and *Transport 21* provide funding for infrastructural improvement works. In the case of County Offaly, and the Tullamore area in particular, significant improvements have been made to **national, secondary and regional roads**.

#### 8.1.2 Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020

The above document reaffirms the Governments vision for sustainability in transport and sets out five key goals:

- 1) To reduce overall travel demand.
- 2) To maximise the efficiency of the transport network.
- 3) To reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- 4) To reduce transport emissions.
- 5) To improve accessibility to transport.

To achieve these goals and to ensure that we have sustainable transport by 2020, the Government sets the following key targets:

- Future population and employment growth will predominately take place in sustainable compact forms, which reduce the need to travel for employment and services
- 500,000 more people will take alternative means to commute to work to the extent that the total share of car commuting will drop from 65% to 55%
- Alternatives such as walking, cycling and public transport will be supported and provided to the extent that these will rise to 55% of total commuter journeys to work
- The total distance travelled by the car fleet in 2020 will not increase significantly from current levels
- A reduction will be achieved on the 2005 figure for greenhouse gas emissions from the transport section.

This document highlights the pivotal need to improve the alignment of spatial and transport planning to stop urban sprawl and urban generated one-off housing in peri-urban areas. Four overarching policies/actions aimed at achieving sustainable transport include:

- Actions to reduce distance travelled by private car and encourage smarter travel, including focusing population growth in areas of employment, to encourage smarter travel, and to encourage people to live in close proximity to places of employment by the use of pricing mechanisms to encourage behavioural change,
- Actions aimed at improving the fuel efficiency of motorised transport through improved fleet structure, energy efficient driving and alternative technologies, and
- Actions aimed at strengthening institutional arrangements to deliver the targets.

#### 8.1.3 National Spatial Strategy Plan 2002-2020 & Midlands Regional Planning Guidelines 2004

Tullamore is located on a "Central Spine" which is identified in the National Spatial Strategy as linking the east/west radial transport corridors by road and bus-based public transport through the Midlands and also creating

a north-south axis through Dundalk, Athlone/Mullingar, Portlaoise to Rosslare. Tullamore's central location, makes it accessible to all cities, ports and airports.

#### 8.1.4 Strategic Development Framework for the Midlands Gateway (2006)

The Strategic Development Framework makes a number of recommendations in relation to the successful development of the Midlands Gateway and in relation to transport, the key messages are as follows:

- Investment in transport in order to increase interconnectivity within the Region.
- Development of an integrated public transport system for the Gateway
- Completion of road improvements and upgrades as a matter of priority, specifically in relation to the N80 and the N52 and the N62 for Offaly.

The Councils acknowledge the recommendations made in the Strategic Development Framework for the Midlands Gateway and will endeavour to carry out these recommendations in order to strengthen the existing transport infrastructure within County Offaly and in turn contribute to a robust and efficient regional and national network.

The Strategic Development Framework for the Midlands Gateway states that one of the main characteristics that a Gateway should aspire to achieving is to be within 1 hour of an airport either with international access or linking to one with such access, and also to have adequate, reliable, cost effective and efficient access to port facilities. The Councils acknowledge that implementation of the measures mentioned above would significantly increase interconnectivity for the Midlands Gateway and will endeavour to facilitate such a development in the County and the Linked Gateway (refer to chapter 2).

#### 8.1.5 Offaly County Development Plan 2009-2015

The County Development Plan 2009-2015 focuses on the strategic policies and objectives for transport planning in County Offaly. Issues include proposed routes for public roads and public transport. Also included are development standards for new development gaining access onto public roads.

#### 8.1.6 Draft Tullamore Transport Study 2009

The Draft Tullamore Transport Study 2009 will commence shortly and its findings and recommendations will be put on public display in late 2009. The main aim of this study is to bring forward proposals, which will accommodate the growth in movement and traffic flows over the next ten years. Objectives and goals to be considered include:

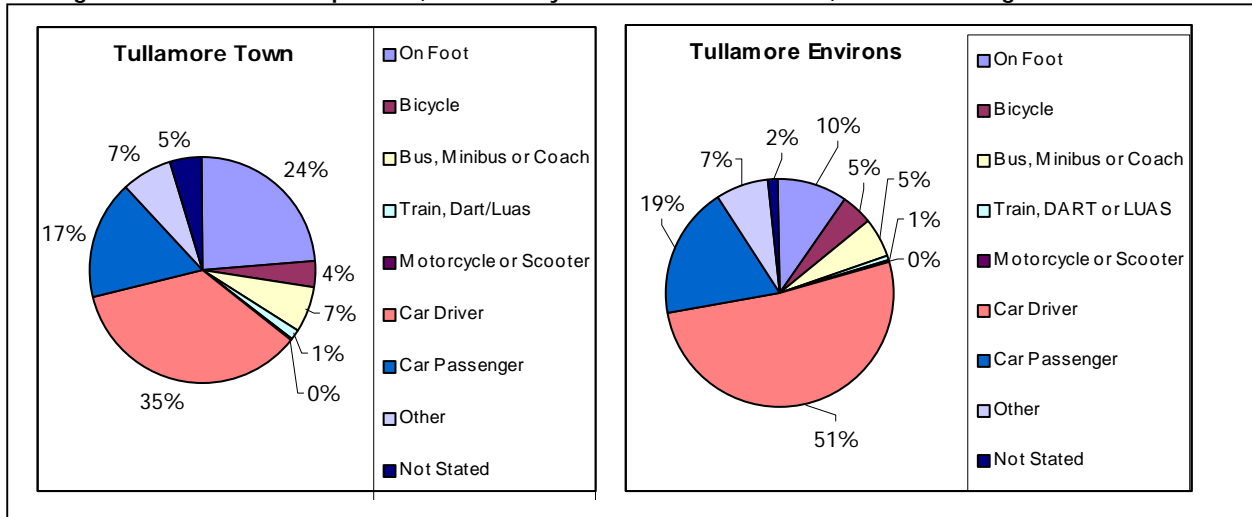
- Survey and analysis of the existing movement and transportation conditions in the plan area.
- Examine proposals outlined in the Draft Tullamore and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016, the County Development Plan 2009-2015 and the National Development Plan 2007-2013.
- Identify road and junction strategies and traffic management proposals in the event that all zones within the development plan shall be fully developed and alternative interim management strategies during the town's progression towards full development.
- Consideration should be given to sustainable transport including public transport strategies, pedestrian priority and cycle paths.
- Identification of the key measures required to provide for best traffic management for the study area.
- Development of a traffic model that incorporates a user friendly forecasting program that can be used by the Councils for the analysis of all development and transportation proposals.

This document will also consider the interrelated relationship between landuse planning and transport activity. An important principle to be analysed in the study is to consolidate the existing built environment and encourage in-depth and infill residential development at higher densities along with improved accessibility within the town.

8.1.7 Tullamore Transport, Movement and Accessibility Issues

Figure 8.1 illustrates the different modes of transport used and the level of usage. Tullamore town covers the town centre area where there is higher density and a greater mixed use development pattern than the outskirts of the town. The diagram highlights a high level of usage of the private car for both town and environs (over 50%). Approximately 24% of the town’s population walk to work, school or college. While, approximately 10% of the environs population walk to work, school or college. The levels of usage for each smart/sustainable mode of transport such as train, bicycle, bus, minibus and/or coach are relatively low in comparison to private car usage.

Figure 8.1: % Share of Population, 5+ Years by Means of Travel to Work, School or College in 2006



Source: Central Statistics Office, Census Report 2006

In order to achieve the aims and goals as set out in Chapters 1 and 2, transport, movement and accessibility are key areas of importance. The following is a list of the key issues in Tullamore:

- Vehicular traffic congestion at pinch-points through-out the town and environs, arising as a result of conflict between through traffic and local traffic.
- Lack of public road network into proposed development lands and therefore, a lack of permeability in new developments – many new developments tend to follow public roads in a linear fashion.
- Lack of provision of pedestrian friendly areas/paths and cycle networks due to capacity of public space given to private automobiles in terms of road space and car parking spaces, specifically in town centre.

It is the aim of the Councils to resolve these issues through policies and objectives contained within this chapter. As highlighted below, due to the nature of the overall aims and goals (within Chapters 1 and 2), planning for issues relating to transport, movement and accessibility are closely tied to achieving the policies and objectives held within other chapters of this plan. Of specific importance is Chapter 5 Master Plans, which address the latter two points above having regard to the implementation of these plans, which will subsequently provide a coherent network of roads, pedestrian friendly networks and cycleways overtime.

8.1.7.1 Long Distance Trips and Short Distance Trips

Having regard to the snapshot provided by Figure 8.1 of trip patterns by mode of transport in Tullamore and the goals, targets and policies arising from the document “Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future, A New Transport Policy for Ireland 2009-2020”, this chapter has been structured as to give equal weight to all modes of transport and therefore the development of a comprehensive and integrated transport system for the Tullamore area.

Therefore, to focus on all traffic movements in Tullamore, the plan area has been divided into the following:

- 1) Long distance trips and

## 2) Short distance trips

Long distance trips focus on movement from Tullamore to other rural areas, towns and cities in the country. The main mode of transport for long distance trips to and from Tullamore is by private car. Other modes of transport at this level include the rail service and private/public bus operators.

Short distance trips relate to trips within the town and environs of Tullamore only. Due to the relatively short distances involved for these trips and as an alternative to the private car, the most efficient, sustainable and smarter mode of travel is walking and/or cycling.

## 8.2 Strategy

### 8.2.1 Public Transport and Movement Interchange/Node

Firstly, to make alternative modes of transport viable and attractive to use by the public, they must be efficient, time saving, comfortable and of high importance comprehensively integrated together in terms of hard infrastructure and real time services.

The Councils are committed to the development of a Public Transport and Movement Interchange/Node at the Railway Station, which will provide for a high quality gateway into Tullamore for commuters, business people and visitors arriving from all over the country (refer to Chapter 5: Masterplans/ Masterplan Area – Grand Canal Quarter). The opportunity exists to create a public transport interchange adjacent to the station which would incorporate bus facilities, provision for cyclists as well as taxis and private car parking. Therefore all integrated modes of public transport services would originate from the train station and to serve both the town and environs and any regional, national and/or international interconnections (by bus service). Such an integrated interchange/transport hub is crucial in supporting the role of Tullamore as a Linked-Gateway Town.

The masterplan areas highlight an exciting opportunity to create well designed, coherent and permeable additions to the urban fabric which by their compact nature, relatively higher densities form a comprehensive network of linkages which will provide a built form which will be more easily and effectively served by public transport at a strategic location.

With the plan for this area to become the central zone of arrival/exit and interconnection to public transport facilities, there will be significant scope for mixed-use, retail, businesses and residential development opportunities given the likely rise in footfalls to this specific area.

### 8.2.2 Long Distance Trips

#### 8.2.2.1 Aim

Where appropriate and feasible, it will be the aim of this plan to encourage and facilitate, for long distance trips, the shift from private car to different modes of transport, such as rail, bus and environmentally friendly methods of travel.

#### 8.2.2.2 Public Transport – Railway Services

Tullamore is centrally located along national interconnecting strategic rail corridors and as a result has an established rail infrastructure network i.e. provides a frequent service to and from Dublin, Galway, Mayo and the Midlands Linked Gateway town of Athlone, as well as an interconnecting node at Portarlington for the south.

The Councils will co operate with and encourage Iarnród Eireann to secure the upgrading of the existing rail linkages between the midlands towns, in particular between Athlone, Tullamore and Portarlington by double tracking. The Councils recognise that the development of the rail network in the midlands would play a very positive role in the social and economic development of the area and would contribute positively to balanced regional development. The Councils will also support a feasibility study to be undertaken to assess the possibility of reopening the Clara-Mullingar link. Plans for a "Public Transport and Movement Interchange/Hub" at the Railway Station in Tullamore will support the above plans to strengthen the rail network and passenger numbers in the midlands area.

### 8.2.2.3 Other Modes of Transport

Public and private bus operators generally have established routes to the major cities of Dublin and Galway. Some of these operators come through Tullamore and connects it to other settlements enroute. The links with Athlone and Mullingar are somewhat weaker (Census 2006: "A Profile of the Working Population of Large Towns").

Furthermore, plans are ongoing for an airport capable of supporting the status of the Linked Gateway.

### 8.2.2.4 National and Regional Routes

Tullamore is conveniently located close to the M6 (Dublin-Galway) which has been fully upgraded to motorway status (Kilbeggan to Athlone section). It is also located on the N52 (Dundalk-Nenagh) national secondary route. The N52 provides Tullamore with links to Tullamore and Athlone, via the N6, respectively. In addition, Tullamore is also located on the N80, which links the N6 at Moate to the N11 at Enniscorthy via Tullamore and Portlaoise.

As stated in the Offaly County Development Plan 2009-2015, Offaly County Council acknowledges its role in facilitating the upgrading of the transport network, particularly in relation to roads that link the principal Gateway towns. The National Roads Authority has committed to the following programmes for Offaly:

- Tullamore/Kilbeggan (N52) - New Road
- Tullamore/Moate (N80) – Reclassified when Tullamore/Kilbeggan (N52) is completed
- Tullamore By-Pass (N52) – to the east of the town (underway)

In addition to this, the Councils regards the upgrade and improvement of the N62, the N52 and the N80 as being important in the regional context, especially in promoting connectivity with the Midlands Gateway.

These road upgrades will have significant effects on the accessibility and competitiveness of the Gateway in terms of ease of access to adjacent regions and other "Gateways", access within the Midlands' Gateway and other large towns in the Region, and on the overall development patterns in the Midlands. The Councils recognise the critical role it has to play in striving to create stronger, high quality transport linkages within the Midlands Gateway and in turn, will seek to ensure that transport linkages within Offaly are of a standard to ensure the successful delivery of people, employment and services to the Midlands Region.

### 8.2.2.5 Through Traffic – Bypass

One of the most significant issues facing Tullamore is the traffic congestion caused as a result of a backlog of through traffic. There are a number of major pinch points of this congestion namely in the town centre and on the arrival routes to the town centre. Construction has commenced on the Tullamore Bypass and is due to be completed in late 2009. The Bypass will alleviate traffic congestion in the town centre by rerouting through traffic around the town. The Bypass departs from the existing line of the N52 approx. 6km southwest of Tullamore town and rejoins the existing N52 approximately 3km north of Tullamore town.

As part of Variation No. 4 of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010, an objective has been included to secure the provision of a Western Bypass/Relief Road to the west of Tullamore town linking the N80 to the north west of the town and with the N52 to the south west of the town and is continued in this plan.

### 8.2.2.6 Technical Standards for New Developments

The Councils will restrict new development requiring direct access to national routes, which are outside designated speed limits in Tullamore environs. Routes subject to these policies are the N-52 and the N80, national secondary roads (refer to policy TTEP 08-21). Also developments that generate significant traffic movement as a result of the use proposed are subject to a Traffic Impact Assessment. The Councils may also require the provision of Road Safety Audits in the case of substantial road works (refer to policy TTEP 08-21).

### 8.2.3 Short Distance Trips

#### 8.2.3.1 Aim

Where appropriate and feasible, it will be the aim of this plan to encourage and facilitate, for short distance trips, the shift from private car to different modes of transport, such as public transport, walking, cycling and environmentally friendly methods of travel.

#### 8.2.3.2 Land-Use Development and Urban Permeability

Much of the traffic within Tullamore is short distance trips (local traffic), travelling to and from points within the environs. The following are means of relieving this type of traffic congestion:

- 1) Locate land uses such as residential areas, schools, work places and leisure spaces closer together and therefore:
  - Reduce the need to travel
  - Create more sustainable short distance travelling i.e. walking and cycling.
  
- 2) Congestion created by local traffic can be greatly relieved by increasing “permeability” or the number of possible routes that can be taken. Links between these land-uses need to be safe and direct for people to walk and cycle to their destination. They also must be designed in such a way so as to discourage “short cutting” by non-local vehicular traffic. This plan is important to identifying possible locations for new vehicular, pedestrian, cycling and traffic links while still allowing movement for local bus services and emergency vehicles.
  - The four master plans prepared in 2008 for the Northern Environs, North Eastern Environs, Grand Canal Quarter and the Southern Environs which informed much of the content of the Variation No. 4 to the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010 indicated how these areas could be brought forward and accessed in an efficient and permeable manner.
  - It is intended that these plans will be incorporated into this plan as local area strategies, see chapter 5.
  - These local area strategies are intended to form a framework within which local development interests shall work together in a co-ordinated manner in order to bring forward a well planned, efficient and coherent outcome which integrates into the existing town fabric.
  - The indicative road network shown in these strategies do create the desired permeability and this will be examined further by the forthcoming Transportation Study. Any refinements recommended by this study may be incorporated into the Development Plan when they are available. Notwithstanding the foregoing, there are a number of highly important strategic routes that are necessary in order to allow the areas to be successfully incorporated into the town and to create a town wide network of local distributors.

These routes will:

- (a) ensure the local area strategies can move forward
  - (b) allow alternative local routes around and through the urban fabric
  - (c) enable public transport to penetrate the built up area and therefore bring ‘bus routes nearer to the people’.
- These routes are, in the main, through land which is currently undeveloped and for ease of identification they are shown on map 8.1, marked A to R.
 

A	Srah Road roundabout.
B	Clara.
C	North of Droim Liath residential area.
D	Ardan Road
E	Ardan Lane
F	N80/N52 (Bypass) link.
G	Chancery Lane (East)
H	N80/Clonminch
I	N80/Clonminch
J	Charleville Road.

K	Spollenstown
LMN	Points within Southern Environs masterplan area.
P	Charleville Road
Q	Tullamore Relief Road.
R	Rahan Road.

- Also shown on this map are three small-scale elements, which are required to complete/improve the network within the existing town area. These are marked X,Y & Z on map 8.1.
 

X	Distributor Road off Collins Lane to north.
Y	Distributor Road between Ballin Rí residential area and 'Kearney's field'.
Z	Chancery Lane (West)

Any relief from traffic pressures which can be given to the town centre, or any other parts of Tullamore in the future will present opportunities for local environmental improvements by the Councils or other bodies, i.e. better and wider footpaths and cycle paths and landscaping, etc. The forthcoming Tullamore Public Realm Study will inform any improvements to the built environment as a result of the construction of the above distributor roads. Where possible and feasible, new developments will be required to "overlook" the above distributor roads. The aim being to create a sense of place and ownership of newly designed public realm/spaces in Tullamore. These distributor roads will be an integral part of the implementation of this plan and while it is likely to be mostly funded by private development, in the interest of planning gain and the strategic development of the town, the complexity of these projects is such that the Council's will have to be involved in guiding and steering each route to completion.

In supplementing the above proposed distributor routes, new private and public developments will also create opportunities for greater permeability, especially in the case of greenfield sites being developed in line with the Masterplan areas. There may be locations where new transport links can facilitate greater all round accessibility within local areas.

#### 8.2.3.3 Tullamore Town & Environs Bus Service/ Parking Bays for Public Transport

As part of the traffic management plan and creation of pedestrian friendly areas in the town centre, the Councils will incorporate parking bays for public transport (buses and taxis) where appropriate. This provision of parking bays for buses and taxis within and/or around the centre makes public transport more accessible for all users. This will be informed by the Tullamore Transportation Study and the Tullamore Public Realm Study.

#### 8.2.3.4 Cycle Networks and Cycle Parking

The Councils recognise the opportunity to market Tullamore as a "*green cycle/transport town*". The provision of a cycle network in the town and environs will give:

- Residents - the opportunity for healthier lifestyles
- Investors - a attractive place to do businesses
- Tourists - a exciting way to see the built heritage of the town and environs

It is the Councils' policy, in line with Government policy ("*Smarter Travel: Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework*", 2009), to support and promote the use of bicycles in Tullamore. It will be an objective to commission a "*Cycle Network and Parking Study*" for the town and environs. It is currently the Councils' policy to ensure that new public roads provide for the provision of footpaths and cycle paths and new developments make provision for bicycle parking (refer to Chapter 14: Development Standards). The "*Cycle Network and Parking Study*" will add an overall strategic framework to this policy. Within the overall framework of this study, the following members of the community will need to be closely involved in order to achieve a quality network of routes:

- Schools

- Businesses and tourist operators
- Residents

#### 8.2.3.5 Pedestrian Network, Pedestrian Friendly Areas and Vehicular Parking

This provision of pedestrian networks and pedestrian friendly areas, along with cycle paths and related infrastructure as mentioned in the above section, are also considered in the following relevant chapters:

- Chapter 5 - Masterplans
- Chapter 13 - Natural Heritage – (*Paragraph 13.2.8: Open Space and Recreation*)

Chapter 13: Natural Heritage highlights the need to improve pedestrian linkages, permeability and accessibility. Strategic proposals will be considered as part of the Tullamore Public Realm Study.

There can be a conflict of interest between providing vehicular parking spaces in the town centre and making the town centre more pedestrian friendly. It is recognised that the short stay parking control system in the town centre has helped to relieve a certain amount of congestion, although further traffic management mitigation measures are required. The Councils will continue to progressively reduce the level of car parking in the town centre, streets, squares and public spaces in an efficient manner without negatively impacting on the balance of vibrancy and vitality of the town centre. The Councils will be informed by the forthcoming Tullamore Transportation Study and Tullamore Public Realm Study.

#### 8.2.3.6 Vehicular Signage

It is recognised that there is an over proliferation of vehicular and advertisement signage in Tullamore. While recognising the importance of vehicular signage, the Councils will adopt a strict policy to location and quantity of same.

#### 8.2.3.7 Disabled Facilities

Disabled facilities in the town were generally adequate, although certain areas still require attention. The Councils will continue to provide for appropriate resurfacing and maintenance of public spaces and appropriate designing of disabled parking. As part of any proposals for the renewal of the public realm, disabled facilities will be given high priority. This will be informed by the Tullamore Transportation Study and Public Realm Study.

## 8.3 Policy

### Strategic/Transport and Land-Use

**TTEP 08-01** It is the Councils' policy to **locate land-uses**, such as residential, schools, work and leisure areas **closer together**, without negatively impacting on the residential/public amenity of Tullamore. The purpose of this policy is to:

- Reduce the need to travel
- Create more sustainable short distance travelling i.e walking and cycling.

This policy will be achieved by adopting the **sequential approach** to development in a proper and plan-led manner. That is, a positive presumption in favour of developing from the centre most point outwards i.e. town centre and neighbourhood centres and a presumption against the development of isolated or outlying sites (refer to Chapter 5: Masterplans).

**TTEP 08-02** It is the Councils' policy to complete the Tullamore Eastern By-Pass.

**TTEP 08-03** The Councils' intend to secure the provision of a relief road/bypass to the west of the town linking the N52 to the north via the N80 and back to the N52 to the south west of the town. A corridor has been identified for this purpose, and it is the Councils' policy to protect this from development (refer to Map 8.).

**TTEP 08-04** It is the Councils' policy to ensure the town is well-connected to both the National Road Network and local centres of population. Therefore any necessary improvements to the N52, N80 and regional roads shall be brought forward when required and as resources become available.

**TTEP 08-05** It is the Councils' policy to facilitate the development of a public transport node in Tullamore centred on the railway station.

**TTEP 08-06** It is the Council's policy to facilitate the development of designated parking facilities for larger vehicles (i.e. heavy goods vehicles) within the Town and Environs area.

**TTEP 08-07** It is the Councils' policy to facilitate development of the masterplan areas by the creation of a network of local distributor routes, which connect these new areas to the existing town in a coherent plan led manner bringing permeability to the resultant urban fabric. These routes will be informed by the relevant masterplans and the Tullamore Transportation Study on its adoption.

**TTEP 08-08** It is the Councils' policy to facilitate the provision of the strategic links required to ensure the satisfactory implementation of the masterplans. These are shown marked A to R on map 8.1 and outlined in sub-section 8.2.3.2.

**TTEP 08-09** In conjunction with the above policies (TTEP 08-06 and TTEP 08-07) it is the Councils' policy to complete important elements in the town's internal network. These are shown as X, Y and Z shown on map 8.1 and outlined in sub-section 8.2.3.2.

**TTEP 08-10** It is the Councils' policy to complete a Transportation Study for the plan area. This study will address the following issues:

- Examination of the existing traffic and transportation conditions in the Study Area.
- Review of proposals outlined in the Town and County Development Plans and the National Development Plan.
- Development of a traffic model that incorporates a user friendly forecasting program that can be used by Offaly County Council for the analysis of all development and transportation proposals.
- The model shall identify road and junction strategies and traffic management proposals in the event that all zones within the development plan shall be fully developed and alternative interim management strategies during the town's progression towards full development.
- Analysis of adopted and new road strategies and recommendations should be reflected in the proposed traffic model.
- Consideration should be given to sustainable transport including public transport strategies, pedestrianisation and cycle path.
- Identification of the key measures required to provide for best traffic management practice for the Study Area.

*On adoption, the findings and recommendations of Tullamore Transportation study will be implemented by the Councils' and used to inform **all aspects** of transportation and movement within the plan area.*

**TTEP 08-11** It is the Councils' policy that the forthcoming Tullamore Public Realm Study will inform any improvements to the built environment as a result of the implementation of proposed distributor roads and/or traffic calming measures in the town centre. Where possible and feasible, new developments will be required to "overlook" the proposed distributor roads. The aim is to create a sense of place and ownership of newly designed and existing, public realm/spaces in Tullamore.

**TTEP 08-12** It is Councils' policy to have regard to government guidelines on transport including "Smarter Travel; A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020" and "Smarter Travel; Ireland's First National Cycle Policy Framework".

**TTEP 08-13** It is Councils' policy to promote Tullamore as a "green cycle/transport town". Having regard to short distance trips within Tullamore town and environs, it is the Councils' policy to encourage and facilitate the **shift** from private car to **different modes of transport**, such as walking, cycling and environmentally friendly methods of travel.

The integration of environmentally friendly/smart methods for short-distance travel, along with the car-user, will make Tullamore a safer, pleasant and efficient town to live, work, do business and visit.

**TTEP 08-14** It is Councils' policy to continue the programme of improvement of footpaths/cycle paths throughout the town and to further develop/extend the network of interlinked pedestrian/cycle routes throughout the town and environs.

**TTEP 08-15** It is Councils' policy to assist and support the further improvement of public transport services for Tullamore and in particular facilitate in the provision and promotion of privately run transportation systems.

**TTEP 08-16** It is Councils' policy to support and facilitate the operation of existing bus services and to facilitate the provision of improved facilities for bus users, including increased destinations and frequencies, especially between major nodes of the Linked Gateway i.e. Athlone-Tullamore- Mullingar.

### Parking

**TTEP 08-17** It is the policy of the Councils to introduce traffic calming and traffic management schemes where required on particular roads and in appropriate areas throughout the Plan area to effect an overall reduction in vehicle speeds to an acceptable level and to reduce the potential for traffic congestion and associated vehicular emissions in urban areas.

**TTEP 08-18** It is the Councils' policy to continue to monitor off-street parking in the town centre and to take appropriate action regarding under-supply or incorrect use. The Councils will have regard to the forthcoming Tullamore Public Realm Study in relation to this issue.

**TTEP 08-19** It is the Councils' policy to continue to secure adequate parking provision for the town and undertake accompanying enforcement to ensure that best use is made of this provision. The Councils will have regard to the Tullamore Public Realm Study in relation to this issue.

**TTEP 08-20** It is the Councils' policy to require that car parking for disabled persons for all development sites and public car parking areas are in accordance with the provisions and standards set out by the National Disability Association in "Building for everyone" published in 2002. In particular the Councils will require that adequate disabled car parking spaces will be provided for each development site or public car parking area, at convenient and easily accessible locations, clearly delineated for use by people with impaired mobility and with sufficient access aisles immediately adjoining each car parking space.

**TTEP 08-21** It is the Councils' policy to require the provision of safe bicycle parking facilities where planning permission is granted for apartment blocks, shopping centres, offices etc.

### Technical Development Standards

**TTEP 08-22** It is the Councils' policy that permissible development requiring direct access (i.e. other than via a public road) to the national secondary roads, outside designated speed limits in Tullamore environs, will be restricted to the residential requirements of established landowners (e.g. farmers) and their sons/daughters only, where the requirement to live on their land is essential for the management of the land. It must be clearly demonstrated in the case of permissible development that a "need" for the dwelling is established and that no reasonable alternative site with access off a minor road is available. There will be no direct access to the Bypass Road.

**TTEP 08-23** It is the Councils' policy to ensure that developments that generate significant traffic movement as a result of the use proposed are subject to a Traffic Impact Assessment. The Councils may also require the provision of Road Safety Audits in the case of substantial road works.

**TTEP 08-24** As part of the promotion Tullamore's image as a "*green cycle/transport town*", it is the Councils' policy, where feasible, to require the provision of cycleways and walkways as part of new development.

**TTEP 08-25** It is the Councils' policy to apply car-parking requirement standards to all new developments in the town in accordance with Chapter 14: Development Standards. It is policy to consider the relaxation of same where a proposed development warrants this relaxation. Where a development is facilitated by public car parking accommodation which has been or will be provided, it is the Councils' policy to ensure a contribution towards the cost of providing such parking accommodation shall be required, as provided by the **Planning and Development Acts 2000-2006**.

## 8.4 Objectives<sup>1</sup>

### Strategic/ Transport and Land-Use

**TTEO 08-01** To complete the Tullamore By-Pass as shown indicatively on Map 8.1.

**TTEO 08-02** To secure the provision of a Western Bypass/Relief Road to the West of Tullamore Town linking the N80 to the north west of the town with the N52 to the south west of the town as shown indicatively on Map 8.1.

**TTEO 08-03** To **Prepare** a Transportation Study for Tullamore which will **inform all types** of movement within the plan area.

**TTEO 08-04** To **Implement** the Tullamore Transportation Study when adopted.

**TTEO 08-05** To secure the provision of the network of internal distributor routes to allow the masterplan areas to be developed in a plan led manner.

**TTEO 08-06** To extend and improve the existing distributor road system, where necessary, to accommodate the growing/changing movement patterns within the town. Including:

- Improve connectivity at the interface between the southern masterplan area and Spollenstown.
- Realign Chancery Lane.
- Provide a link road between Riverside and Church Avenue.
- Reconfigure the Kilcruttin intersection at the Railway Station.
- Improve connectivity between the north-eastern quadrant of the town and the existing road network. Utilising the former access way created to construct the hospital.

**TTEO 08-07** Notwithstanding the above, Arden Heights, Knockowen Road and Maple Grove will maintain their status as cul-de-sacs.

### Traffic & Parking

**TTEO 08-08** To encourage and support the development of multi-storey car parking facilities within Tullamore Town within appropriate locations to accommodate the centralised provision of easily accessible car parking for users and visitors to the town.

**TTEO 08-09** To progressively implement the recommendations of the Tullamore Transportation Study in order to:

- promote greater efficiency in traffic circulation
- provide additional car parking spaces in the town
- provide more public disabled parking spaces throughout the town centre

<sup>1</sup> The order of listing of objectives is not intended to indicate priorities. Subject to the availability of resources, it is the Councils' aim to monitor and accomplish the objectives listed in this section within the period of the plan.

**TTEO 08-10** Facilitate traffic movement by encouraging the construction of the distributors highlighted in map 8.1. Their provision will allow traffic calming and an extension to the public realm. Significant calming in the town centre on High Street, Bridge Street and O'Connor Square will allow the creation of a pedestrian priority area in the town centre. This will be informed by the Tullamore Transportation Study and the Public Realm Study.

#### Non-Vehicular Access

**TTEO 08-11** To facilitate and provide disabled car parking for all development sites and public car parking areas in accordance with the provisions and standards set out by the National Disability Association in "Building for everyone" published in 2002.

**TTEO 08-12**

- Develop a network of interlinked pedestrian priority linkages through the town.
- Pedestrianise part of Bury Quay/Offaly St. area
- Provide a new pedestrian bridge adjacent to Bury Quay, linking Kilbride Park and Clontarf Road
- Pedestrianise North side of O'Connor Square to provide a focal urban space
- Complete pedestrian link between O'Connor Square and Market Square via the disused bridge and Church St, in conjunction with part-pedestrianisation of O'Connor Square.
- Re-open Meath Lane.
- Investigate the feasibility of creating linkages, pedestrian and/or cycleways as follows:
  1. From Whitehall to Riverside along the Tullamore River.
  2. From Patrick Street to Bridge Centre.
  3. From the Tanyard to High Street via Roselawn.
- Preserve and improve, where necessary all existing pedestrian and cycle routes

#### Public Transport

**TTEO 08-13** Facilitate the creation of a public transport interchange node centred on the Tullamore Railway Station including car parking, bus stops, and associated facilities