

## APPENDIX ONE

THE TREATMENT OF ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES AND  
METHODOLOGIES IN GUIDANCE AND PRACTICE IN WALES, AND  
THE REST OF EUROPE.

## **1. ACCESSIBILITY IN WELSH GUIDANCE AND ADVICE**

- 1.1 Wales is in a state of transition of devolution of some aspects of government from the rest of the United Kingdom. While different guidance and advice have been provided for Wales in some aspects of planning policy in the past, the situation is being reviewed. Here we review current guidance, drawing mainly on Planning Guidance (Wales) Planning Policy (in its 1999 and revised consultation draft forms), the Welsh Transport Policy Statement "Transporting Wales into the Future", and Technical Advice Note 18 Transport (in its 1998 form and revised consultation draft form). Other planning guidance on Unitary Development Plans and the Technical Advice note on retailing and town centres are also considered, along with other relevant literature.

### **Planning Guidance (Wales): Planning policy**

- 1.2 In terms of general principles Planning Guidance (Wales): Planning Policy stresses the key factors that should be reconciled by the planning system:

*"The planning system regulates the development and use of land in the public interest. It should reconcile the needs of development and conservation, and secure economy, efficiency and amenity in the use of land, and protect natural resources thereby contributing to sustainable development." (8.1)*

- 1.3 Accessibility is not mentioned in this list, but is implicit in terms of many of the factors mentioned. Similarly, in later sections of the guidance there are no sections relating specifically to accessibility, but its importance is made clear in many parts of the sections dealing with transport.

*"Policies to support sustainable development include:*

- reducing the level of road traffic, or reducing the rate of growth;*
- encouraging alternative means of travel and transport which have less environmental impact, eg public transport, cycling and walking;*
- reducing reliance on the motor car;*
- seeking to ensure the more effective use of the transport network and targeting resources to best effect." (8.1)*

- 1.4 Encouraging and discouraging different modes of travel implies altering the accessibility of land uses by these modes, as does making more effective use of transport networks.

- 1.5 Similarly, guidance on Development Plans makes clear reference to land use/ transport interactions:

*"Development plans should contain an explanation of the overall aims of the authority's transport policies and the way in which those transport policies support the other policy aims of the plan. Plans should provide the means for:*

- examining the relationship between transport and land use planning;*

- *promoting the integration and co-ordination of transport and land use planning;*
- *promoting strategies to reduce the need to travel." (8.1)*

1.6 From the transport side there is recognition that provision for transport and improvements to interchanges are important in affecting accessibility to land uses.

*"Plans should also include policies and proposals relating to the development of transport infrastructure and related services (eg public transport interchange facilities, rail facilities, harbours and airports including safeguarding zones)." (8.1)*

1.7 The importance of walking and cycling is also stressed:

*"The impact of policies and development on pedestrians and cyclists should be considered. Development plans should encourage the implementation of specific measures to assist pedestrians and cyclists, including the provision of safe and convenient routes between facilities, and parking facilities for cyclists." (8.1)*

1.8 Transport provision differences between urban and rural areas are also recognised:

*Plan policies need to reflect the differences between the characteristics of urban and rural areas including the scale of development and the availability of public transport. (8.1)*

### **Public Transport**

1.9 It is where public transport is discussed that accessibility is most explicitly referred to, with accessibility profiles put forward:

*The likely availability and use of public transport is an important ingredient in determining locational policies designed to reduce the need to travel by car. **Preparing accessibility profiles for public transport** may assist local authorities in assessing possible development sites. (8.2)*

1.10 Rail is mentioned for the greater certainty it offers due to its fixed infrastructure, while the advantages of infrastructure for buses such as bus lanes are also stressed. This implies a need for accessibility methodologies to take account of the fixity of associated infrastructure.

1.11 The link between transport provision and improved accessibility that can be offered is recognised, as is the scope for planning conditions and obligations to ;

*Local authority support for bus services, passenger rail services or proposals for associated facilities should be consistent with locational policies in development plans. Where development can only take place with improvements to public transport services, local authorities should consider the use of planning conditions and/or planning obligations.*

## **Location of development**

- 1.12 Guidance on locations for different types of development is closely related to factors which relate closely to accessibility.

*"Local authorities should aim, as far as practical, to balance employment and population in order to enable people to live near work.*

*... should adopt policies to locate **major generators of travel demand in existing centres or other locations which are highly accessible by public transport, cycling and walking.***

*Proposed development sites for **housing, employment, retailing, leisure and recreation, and community facilities such as libraries, schools and hospitals should be within existing urban areas or in other locations which are or can be well served by public transport, or can be reached by walking or cycling.***

*Through their development plans **authorities should encourage higher density residential development near public transport centres, or near corridors well served by public transport (or with the potential to be so served).***"

- 1.13 It is apparent from these statements that accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport is of key importance, especially where development is not in locations which, by definition, are likely to have good accessibility, such as town centres.

### *Location with respect to freight needs*

- 1.14 Where freight is concerned it is accessibility to freight networks that consistently comes over as a key factor.

*"Where possible, employment and distribution sites should be conveniently located for access to rail sidings, wharves or harbours to encourage freight movement by rail or water rather than road. ... Local authorities should consider which routes are most suitable for use by road freight and encourage the location or relocation of distribution and operating centres and other developments generating frequent road freight movements on sites with access to those routes.*

- 1.15 However while such accessibility should be good, there are also other factors to be taken into account which will sometimes weigh against the most accessible locations.

*"However, direct access onto primary routes from new development should be avoided where possible. Where feasible, access should be on to a secondary route."*

## **Development Control**

- 1.16 Four factors are stressed when determining planning applications for local planning authorities to consider for developments which have transport implications:

- *the impacts on travel demand of the proposed development;*
- *the level and nature of public transport provision;*

- accessibility by a choice of means of travel;
- the willingness of a developer to provide infrastructure or measures to manage traffic or promote travel by public transport, walking or cycling, to overcome objections to a proposed development.

1.17 Thus accessibility by all modes is only one of four primary considerations, but it is implied in the other three.

### **Summary**

1.18 Planning Guidance (Wales): Planning Policy guides developers and Local Authorities towards solutions that will incorporate accessibility in a variety of ways, but stops short of suggesting methodologies that should be adopted, or might be useful. "Accessibility profiles" for public transport is the most specific mention.

### **Planning Policy (Wales) Consultation Draft**

1.19 Planning Policy (Wales) Consultation Draft, published in 2001 is more prescriptive than the earlier Planning Guidance (Wales) Planning Policy in many areas relating to accessibility. It is much more explicit about the need to consider accessibility related issues in forward planning and in development control, and in specifying that accessibility methodologies should be used to aid this process.

### **Sustainable Development**

1.20 Sustainable Development has come to the forefront in terms of aims of planning policy:

*"The Assembly will promote developments that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, i.e. 'sustainable' development. This involves supporting the Assembly's Sustainable Development Scheme, and the UK vision of sustainable development, which is based on four 'objectives' which need to be integrated and pursued simultaneously.*

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone;
- Effective protection of the environment;
- Prudent use of nature resources; and
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth." (para 3.1.1)

1.21 Sustainability is seen within the wider context of goals of planning policy, with the emphasis (for accessibility considerations in land use planning) on reducing the need for travel:

*"The following objectives should be taken into account in the preparation of development plans and the control of development throughout Wales:*

- Maximise opportunities for community development and social welfare;

- Promote development patterns which minimise the need to travel and support an integrated transport system." (para 3.1.5)

### **Spatial Planning**

1.22 Spatial planning has become of importance in Wales, and the forthcoming National Spatial Development Plan is reflected in this guidance. Planning should aim to ....

- "Secure an appropriate settlement pattern to meet the needs of the economy, the environment and health and well being, including maintaining and improving the vitality, attractiveness and viability of town, district, local and village centres. This includes a preference for retail, leisure, office and other key uses in centres, and support for mixed development;
- Locate developments where they can maximise accessibility between them and existing facilities and areas of development by walking, cycling and public transport and where reliance on the use of the private car can be minimised. Development in centres along existing transport corridors and approaches such as clustering economic development could contribute to reducing travel growth;
- Secure improvements to transport facilities and service which concentrate on maintaining or improving accessibility to communities, services, facilities, to secure economic growth, and/or to improve safety and amenity." (para 3.4.2)

### **Sustainability Principles in Development Plans**

1.23 The guidance sets out how sustainability appraisal will be used for Development Plans to ensure that policy goals are met.

"A systematic sustainability appraisal is the most effective way of ensuring that the implications of an emerging development plan are considered as an integral part of its preparation. It ensures that the objectives of a policy are clearly laid out and that the trade-offs between options can be identified and assessed." (para 4.6.1)

### **Accessibility and the Location of Development**

1.24 A specific section on accessibility and the location of development spells out some of the ways in which accessibility should be integrated into policy thinking and practice.

"Improving accessibility is a key objective for the planning system that can be achieved by ensuring that housing, jobs, shopping, leisure and services are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. Planning can also play a significant role in achieving the Assembly's objectives for social inclusion by ensuring that development is accessible to all by means other than private car." (para 12.2.1)

- Planning authorities should assess the extent to which their UDP settlement strategy and new development is consistent with **minimising the need to travel and increasing accessibility by modes other than the private car.**
- A broad balance between housing and employment opportunities should be promoted to **minimise the need for long distance commuting.**

- Local authorities should adopt policies to locate major generators of travel demand ... within existing urban areas or in other locations which are, or can be, well served by public transport, or can be reached by walking or cycling.
- Preparing accessibility profiles for public transport, walking or cycling may assist local authorities in plan preparation and assessing possible development sites.
- Wherever possible travel intensive developments should be located at major public transport nodes or interchanges.
- Higher density development, including residential development should be encouraged, near public transport nodes, or near corridors well served by public transport (or with the potential to be so served). (para 12.2.2)

1.25 It goes on to say that current sites should be re-assessed in terms of their potential use.

*Planning authorities should reassess development sites which are highly accessible to non-car modes and allocate them for travel intensive uses such as offices, shopping, leisure, hospitals and housing of sufficient density to fully utilise the accessibility potential of the site. Sites which are unlikely to be well served by public transport, walking and cycling should either not be allocated for development or be allocated or reallocated for uses which are not travel intensive. (para 12.2.3)*

*In rural areas the majority of new development should be located in those settlements which have a good accessibility by non-car modes which compared to the rural area as a whole. Local service centres should be designated by local authorities and be identified as the preferred locations for most new development including housing and employment provision. The approach should be supported by the LTP strategy and where appropriate the service delivery plans of the local service providers. (para 12.2.4)*

### Transporting Wales into the Future

1.26 The Welsh Transport Policy Statement "Transporting Wales into the Future" follows the same principles as the Planning Policy Guidance (Wales) in terms of accessibility, though some other important points are made. Land use transport interaction is stressed:

*"In order to achieve the Government's policies for a sustainable pattern of development it is necessary to appreciate these (land use and transport) interactions and to devise integrated policies and strategies which relate to transport, land use planning and the environment." (9.1)*

1.27 The need to build on existing patterns of development is also made clear. While ...

*"a large new project or development area ... could provide the means for a substantial and rapid reorganisation of land use and transport arrangements .. in most areas progress to more integrated and sustainable patterns must recognise and build on the established situation.*

1.28 Locational and development challenges are described as:

- town centres which pre-date and are ill adapted to high levels of car usage,

- extensive housing areas which lack local amenities and have poor public transport to local and town centres,
- recent out of town businesses and retail parks almost entirely dependent on the car, and
- the poor quality environments in some urban areas which encourage a car based move of population to the urban fringe and to commuter villages. (9.2)

1.29 All of the above have accessibility implications, in terms of development which made sense at the time, but with changing access to transport modes, and relationship to other land uses (along with other factors) renders their current characteristics unsatisfactory. Increasing accessibility is implied as one means of improvement.

#### *Mobility and accessibility*

1.30 Accessibility is specifically referred to as being of high value to people, and maintaining accessibility by all modes is put forward as a major plank of policy. The message can be taken to be that while people may confuse mobility and accessibility the policy will be to consider accessibility by all modes.

*"Accessibility to a wide choice of locations for work, shopping or leisure and the opportunity to live in pleasant environments are features which will be defended by those who enjoy them. We will seek to maintain accessibility and extend its benefits to those not currently enjoying them, while seeking to reduce the need to travel and reliance on the car." (9.3)*

#### *Accessibility considerations in Development Plans*

1.31 It is made clear that accessibility should take a stronger role than in the past, and the need for methodologies to facilitate this is stressed:

*The development of new methods for relating the location of land uses to different site characteristics, including accessibility, may in the future assist the preparation of development plans. The need to provide planning guidance on such methods will be considered. (9.19)*

#### *Planning conditions and accessibility*

1.32 It is stressed that planning conditions and obligations will often be associated with accessibility related provision. It will be necessary for methodologies to account for more detailed assessments of accessibility relating to individual developments.

*In determining planning applications the impacts on travel demand, public transport provision, accessibility and the willingness of a developer to provide infrastructure to overcome objections should all be taken into account. (9.23)*

*In appropriate situations a range of improvements to transport facilities and services may be secured by means of conditions and obligations.*

*... where they are justified, improvements should be sought to benefit walkers and cyclists and to encourage public transport links to the development concerned. (9.24)*

#### *Cross boundary issues*

- 1.33 It is apparent that boundaries of local planning authorities should not be ignored in using accessibility in planning. It will be necessary for methodologies to extend beyond boundaries to ensure that the development plan of one area is not undermined by its neighbour.

#### *Location in rural areas*

- 1.34 Accessibility is considered of importance in the location of developments in rural areas as well as in urban areas:

*The distinctive needs of rural areas will need sensitive solutions which recognise the benefits of a mix of measures at an appropriate scale - for example upgrading public transport links and encouraging development in accessible locations. (9.4)*

### **Planning Guidance (Wales): Unitary Development Plans**

- 1.35 Planning Guidance (Wales): Unitary Development Plans provides guidance to Local Planning Authorities on the preparation of Unitary Development Plans. Most of the text is concerned with the procedures and level of content of the plans rather than guidance on the thinking that should go into the Development Plan.
- 1.36 However Paragraph 3.9 states that in the Overall Strategy (in Part 1 of the UDP) "*Land use/transportation strategy addressing accessibility and the provision of strategic and integrated transport facilities including highways, railways, and other infrastructure*" should be addressed along with housing, conservation and environmental, economic, mineral, waste treatment, tourism, and energy considerations. Urban and rural dimensions of these are stressed (para 3.10).
- 1.37 As with other guidance accessibility is of importance, but methodologies are not suggested.

### **Technical Advice Note (Wales) (No 18): Transport**

- 1.38 Technical Advice Note (Wales) (No. 18): Transport is designed to be read in conjunction with Planning Guidance (Wales) Planning Policy and is concerned with planning matters directly relating to transport changes.
- 1.39 Its main concern relating to accessibility is concerned with "*the location of a wide range of facilities at the local level so that they are accessible by foot and cycle*" (para 12) and using transport changes to meet the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. Similarly, public transport (para 22) is linked to land use policies promoting "*development in areas accessible by means other than the private car*". Local authorities are given guidance on practical measures to make these modes more attractive and advice on how to cater for them in development plans.

## **Technical Advice Note 18 Revision Consultation Draft**

- 1.40 The revised draft of Technical Advice Note 18 is very much more explicit about the role of accessibility in transport related land use planning. It states National Assembly for Wales policy of "*wishing to extend choice in transport and secure accessibility and mobility in ways which support sustainable development by encouraging the development of an integrated transport system which is safe, efficient, clean and fair*". It specifies the four aspects of integration by which this will be achieved:
- *"integration within and between different types of transport;*
  - *integration with land use planning;*
  - *integration with the environment; and,*
  - *integration with policies for education, health and wealth creation".* (para 4)
- 1.41 The relationship between land use planning and transport is clearly stated:
- "Land use planning can help to achieve the Assembly's objectives for integrated land use and transport planning through:*
- *reducing the need to travel by influencing the location of development and its relationship to transport infrastructure;*
  - *ensuring that new development includes appropriate pedestrian, cycling and public transport provision;*
  - *promoting cycling and walking;*
  - *supporting the provision of high quality public transport;*
  - *supporting traffic management measures; and*
  - *supporting necessary infrastructure improvements".* (para 5)
- 1.42 Methodologies relating to accessibility are clearly of relevance to the first four of these policies.

### **Accessibility**

- 1.43 Paragraph 23 sets out in clear terms how accessibility should be incorporated into thinking and practice. The following quotation is the whole paragraph, but is split into bullet points to stress the various components.
- *"Accessibility is a measure of the ease of reaching a destination from a given origin, (origin accessibility), or the ease with which a given destination can be reached by potential visitors, (destination accessibility)".*
  - *When identifying sites in UDPs and in determining major planning applications planning authorities should consider the use of accessibility measuring techniques to assist decision making.*
  - *Different accessibility measuring techniques may be appropriate depending upon local circumstances and the nature of the plan proposal or planning application.*

- *Techniques include*
  - *simple measures of travel time,*
  - *Geographic Information System (GIS) based tools and*
  - *complex calculations of accessibility based on transport models.*
- *Accessibility profiles may be prepared for people and freight for all modes to determine whether a location has the potential to minimise travel particularly by private car.*
- *The profiles should relate to both access from housing and access to employment and other destinations. The profiles should reflect the catchment area served and the quality of service resulting in relative indicators of accessibility for different sites."* (para 23)

1.44 It can be seen in this guidance that accessibility is treated with a seriousness and thought that was lacking in the past in planning related guidance.

### *Location of Development*

1.45 Accessibility is also considered explicitly in guidance on locations for developments of different types.

*"The location of major travel generating uses ... can also significantly influence the number and length of journeys. It should be a key planning objective to ensure that employment, shopping, services and leisure are highly accessible by public transport, walking and cycling. To help achieve this UDPs and decisions on individual planning applications should seek wherever possible to locate such developments in places which offer genuine and easy access by a range of transport modes.*

*UDP policies and land allocations should therefore:*

- *locate major generators of travel demand in city, town and district centres and near public transport interchanges, as a means to reduce car dependency and increase social inclusion by ensuring that development is accessible by public transport for those without access to a car;*
- *focus local facilities for which there is a regular need close to their users in local and rural centres, ensuring easy access for all, especially by walking and cycling. Local facilities include primary schools, doctors surgeries, local convenience shops; and*
- *consider the potential for changing travel patterns, by for example increasing the sustainability of existing developments through a co-ordinated approach to UDP allocations and transport improvements.* (para 19)

*Locations that are highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, particularly in the vicinity of public transport interchanges, offer significant opportunities to reduce the need to travel. When preparing or reviewing UDPs planning authorities should reassess development sites which are highly accessible to non car modes and allocate them for travel intensive uses such as offices, shopping, leisure and hospitals. Care should be taken to ensure that such developments are at sufficient densities to fully utilise the accessibility potential of the site. Consideration should also be given to mixed uses including housing where appropriate. Sites which are unlikely to be well served by public*

*transport, walking and cycling should either not be allocated for development in the UDP or be allocated or reallocated for uses which are not travel intensive.* (para 20)

### Rural areas

- 1.46 Accessibility and preferred locations for planning are related to accessibility for rural areas. The emphasis is on drawing a compromise between an acknowledgement of the importance of the car, with the need to cater for the needs of those without cars.

*"The car is important for accessibility in rural areas and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. However significant population groups including women, the young and those with low incomes, who do not own a car or have limited access to a car can experience severe problems of social exclusion. Improving accessibility for these groups will help to promote social inclusion and reduce rural isolation."* (para 21)

- 1.47 Further details of the ways in which developments should be located in rural areas are suggested:

- *"... the majority of new development should be located ... where access by non car modes is comparatively good.*
- *... planning authorities should consider identifying local service centres when preparing their UDPs.*
  - *These centres may comprise a market town, large village or closely associated group of villages.*
  - *Local service centres should be the preferred locations for most new development including housing and employment provision.*
- *This overall approach should be supported by the LTP strategy and ... service delivery plans of local service providers ...*
- *The adoption of local service centres will help to promote the use of public transport, walking and cycling and minimise the need for journeys to larger centres."* (para 22)

### The Transport Framework for Wales (a consultation paper)

- 1.48 The transport framework for Wales consultation published in March 2001 aims to help create a future framework for transport development in Wales. It states it aims as to ...

*Develop a better co-ordinated and sustainable transport system to support local communities and the creation of a prosperous economy' by measures including:*

- *to reduce the pressure on the environment by improving public transport and offering alternatives to travelling by car;*
- *to enable about a quarter of commuting to work to take place by means other than by car compared to about a fifth in the late 1990s;*
- *to facilitate a higher proportion of freight being carried by rail;*
- *to improve road safety.* (para 3.1)

- 1.49 Accessibility is placed in the objectives in terms of both accessibility and mobility.

*"We have to reverse years of decline in public transport. We need to reduce dependence on the car and at the same time improve accessibility and mobility for everybody particularly those without access to a car. We need to establish the basis for everyone to make integrated and co-ordinated decisions whether they are investing in transport or just planning a journey."*

- 1.50 In general, accessibility does not feature highly in terms of discussion in the document though it is mentioned in the importance of "*a public transport system that "links to all major settlements in Wales including from rural areas"* (para 5.2), and in the vision section "*to facilitate a transport system that ... changes travel patterns and transport usage and where appropriate reduces the need to travel by integrating with land use planning*" (6.1). Also "*What we want in five years*" includes "*greater access particularly for those who do not have a car*", and "*less dependence on the car*" (6.2)
- 1.51 These all point to needs to analyse accessibility, especially for those without access to cars.

### **Guidance on Local Transport Plans in Wales (September 1999)**

- 1.52 Local Transport Plans are required by all Unitary Authorities to set out plans and provision for transport in the area for the next 5 years. They are new in conception, and the current plans are provisional, and may be ratified, or re-submitted.
- 1.53 The concept of accessibility is specifically referred to in the guidance, in relation to ensuring integration between land-use and transport planning and to encourage partnership working
- 1.54 However, the importance given to accessibility does not compare with the weight given to other factors as much as it might. For example, it is not specifically mentioned in the Annex B section on LTP Elements in Development Plans. The document is focussed upon the provision of transport infrastructure and services. It does, however, relate the modal issues to the need to promote improved accessibility (see below for comments from the document).
- 1.55 The emphasis on accessibility is seen as being to improve access to key services and reduce social exclusion, although no specific measures or indicators are proposed. Examples of cases where accessibility is stated as being of importance are given below.

*"In rural areas the key issue is to promote accessibility" (para 9) "Measures to improve accessibility and widen choice of transport mode will need to be tailored to local circumstances and will depend on the level of existing transport services and the location of amenities".*

*"Links should also be built with social services to address accessibility....and there should be close co-operation with planning departments to ensure that future land allocations and assessments for major planning applications take full account of the need to create sustainable integrated transport networks for the whole area." (para 11)*

*"Cross-boundary movements between urban centres and across Wales, whether for employment, shopping or leisure purposes, are substantial. Those living in rural areas*

*often require access to key services which are, in some cases, located in another local authority area." (para 12)*

- 1.56 It is stressed that appraisal of the LTP must be set against the NATA criteria including: "*accessibility - improving access to everyday facilities for those without a car and reducing community severance*" (para 25). The reader is referred to later comments on NATA, and it will be noted that the Welsh LTP guidance goes further in accessibility consideration than the English "GOMMMS".

### **The Transport Legacy in Wales (Transport Advisory Group March 1999)**

- 1.57 This document consists of a Final Report to the National Assembly, backed up by a collection of Key Advisory Group Papers covering topics including accessibility, gender issues, land use planning, safe routes to school, freight, sustainability, and integrated transport policy. This report represents advice to government rather than guidance or policy from government.
- 1.58 None of the key summary points in the final report relate directly to accessibility but under "A New Policy Direction" the integration of land use and transport is stressed, including:
- "... there is a need to make it easier for people to make more sustainable travel choices ..."*
- "... there is a strong need to integrate transport and land use planning policies, and that greater emphasis should be given to transport in developing land allocation policies."*
- "On land use planning the group was conscious of the need for further analysis to be undertaken to support criteria based accessibility policies relating to urban areas (such as the Dutch ABC approach) and rural areas (accessibility profiles)." (all quotes from p23)*

- 1.59 Thus there is a strong indication that accessibility is important and suggestions are made concerning the ways in which it could be incorporated into methodology.

#### ***Key Advisory Group Papers***

- 1.60 Accessibility is mainly dealt with in the land use planning chapter but is considered to be a key issue in other papers.
- 1.61 Accessibility is seen as very important especially for rural Wales to improve access to jobs etc. Planning Guidance (Wales) is seen to set the context for advice on the use of accessibility in planning.

*It is important to radically " change planning and transport guidance to deliver a more sustainable settlement and land use distribution which would improve accessibility." (Gender Issues p4)*

*"Strategic and local planning has a vital effect on all aspects of accessibility" (Accessibility Issues p4) Access to developments "has become almost wholly car dependent"*

- 1.62 Accessibility methodologies are suggested as being useful especially;
- application of geographically based sequential testing for a wider range of developments including large office developments, major leisure facilities and sports stadia.
  - an approach similar the Dutch ABC policy for planning in urban areas, and
  - accessibility profiling for rural areas.

*"In looking at rural Wales, the key issue would seem to be the promotion of accessibility rather than mobility and, therefore, it is important to be able to develop a methodology (eg accessibility profiling) which would provide guidance on identifying potential development locations from a public transport perspective" (Land use p9)*

*"The needs of rural areas should be given particular attention, and accessibility needs recognised and responded to" (Gender Issues p10)*

- 1.63 It is implied that accessibility needs to be improved to reduce social exclusion, especially for women and to promote access to opportunities.

*"The distribution of land uses and developments have for many years been based on the premise of personal mobility, largely through car availability. This premise does not automatically mean increased personal accessibility and this past emphasis on mobility over accessibility has meant that many individuals are currently discriminated against in terms of accessing locations and activities. Lack of accessibility can be a major factor in social exclusion and for many women social exclusion means that they cannot be economically active or have adequate access to key facilities." (Gender Issues p3)*

- 1.64 The development of methodologies are suggested for using accessibility in planning in annexes.

- 1.65 Land use paper annex I describes "an approach suitable for some urban areas - the ABC system developed in the Netherlands" including a review of its implementation in Holland. The description in the Annex does not, however, describe the methodologies that would be used or the criteria that might define A, B, or C locations in a Welsh context.

- 1.66 Land use paper annex II describes "*an approach that could be developed for rural areas based on identifying those factors which inhibit accessibility in rural areas and ranking rural settlements by accessibility*". What it says is:

*"Methodologies and techniques need to be developed which allow for 'accessibility profiles' to be developed for settlements in rural areas."*

*"Accessibility profiles will need to recognise (a) the opportunities to access developments in rural settlements by means other than the private car and (b) be based on models which are sufficiently sophisticated to take into account temporal changes in movement and demand for access."*

*"Accessibility profiles will need to be sufficiently robust to allow for:*

- *"ranking of rural settlements into 'accessibility hierarchies' for incorporation in development plans;*

- *"locational choices to be made and defended on the basis of the type of mobility patterns (i.e. travel patterns) generated by different types of development, and*
- *"negotiation of enhanced accessibility to a given level of provision where developments are proposed in locations which would not generally be acceptable on accessibility grounds.*

1.67 This suggested approach is similar to that suggested for Transport Assessments, arising out of the English PPG13 Transport, although the suggestion is for a stronger plan led system with rural settlements pre-defined in terms of their accessibility, and therefore suitability for different development types.

### **Accessibility in guidance and advice for Wales - Summary**

- 1.68 Accessibility is recognised as being key to both land use and transport planning, and the links between them are strongly recognised. But it is apparent that suggestions for methodologies to address these issues is lacking, except for suggestions of what methodologies might take into account in "The Transport Legacy in Wales". The message comes over strongly in most other literature that accessibility should be an important criteria in many policies, plans, and decision, but the implication must be in general that a qualitative understanding of locations that are accessible and those that are not will suffice.
- 1.69 While qualitative understanding is important (and a good understanding may provide more useful analysis than many accessibility indicators) it is apparent that there is need for more guidance to Local Authorities as to what kind of methodologies are useful, and where, if accessibility is to be treated at all uniformly.

## **2. ACCESSIBILITY IN OTHER UK GUIDANCE AND ADVICE**

2.1 Guidance for Wales has been based very strongly on guidance from other parts of the United Kingdom, having in general, been very recently inherited from guidance from DETR (and its predecessors). It is from the other devolving regions that a more local interest is encouraging the development of new thinking.

### **UK and England**

#### ***PPG13 Transport***

2.2 Planning Policy Guidance 13 Transport, is in the process of being redrafted, with the new version expected during November 2000. Like earlier versions accessibility is seen as one of many important factors.

*"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."* (Para 4)

2.3 A new element is the idea of Transport Assessments for major new developments which replaces the Traffic Impact Assessment. The assessment of accessibility by all modes is a major part of a Transport Assessment, and implies that methodologies are needed to illustrate anticipated levels of accessibility.

*"For major proposals, the assessment should illustrate accessibility to the site by all modes and the likely modal split of journeys to and from the site."* (Para 23)

2.4 Accessibility also becomes more important in Development Plans, and in Regional Planning, and here again, there is an implied need for methodologies to illustrate levels of accessibility. For Development Plans accessibility should be used to assess land for different uses, and at the regional level, public transport accessibility criteria is of importance.

*"A key planning objective is to ensure that jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking, and cycling. This is important for all, but especially for those who do not have regular use of a car and to promote social inclusion. In preparing their development plans, local authorities should give particular emphasis to accessibility in identifying the preferred areas and sites where such land uses should be located, to ensure they will offer realistic, safe and easy access by a range of transport modes, and not exclusively by car. Regional planning guidance should set a strategic framework for this exercise through the use of public transport accessibility criteria for regionally or sub-regionally significant levels or types of development"* (Para 19)

- 2.5 It is likely that guidance on conducting Transport Assessments (due to be published in early 2001) will emphasise the need for simple indicators of accessibility in accessibility profiles for new developments, concentrating on populations (or other opportunities) within isochrones for each main mode of travel. For development plans a similar approach will be suggested, using area wide measures rather than measuring access to one proposed development location.

### ***The 1998 Transport White Paper - A new deal for transport***

- 2.6 "A New Deal for Transport" was the UK government's White Paper, published in July 1998. Relative to previous documents it stressed the role of accessibility in transport policy, and throughout the document, used five criteria by which to judge many aspects of transport policy. These were Environment, Economy, Safety, Accessibility, and Integration.
- 2.7 The key message of the White Paper was that all decisions should consciously consider these five criteria, in an interrelated way.
- 2.8 Related to the White Paper is the "New Approach To Appraisal" (NATA for short) which changed assessment for the cost-benefit approach previously used to a multi-criteria approach based on the five key aspects described above. In this multi-criteria approach the aim is to provide politicians and other decision makers with the key information they need to make a balanced judgement. While some formulations of NATA provide guidelines for assessing criteria, others don't. One that does is Guidance on Methodologies for Multi Modal Studies (GOMMMS for short) which is described in more detail below.

### ***Other Planning Policy Guidance***

- 2.9 PPG3 (Housing) requires local planning authorities to build in ways which  
*"exploit and deliver accessibility by public transport to jobs, education and health facilities, shopping, leisure and local services"*
- 2.10 PPG6 (Retail and town centre development) requires that  
*"At the regional and strategic level, local authorities should establish a hierarchy of town centres, taking account of accessibility by public transport, to identify preferred locations for major retail and leisure investment. At the local level, preference should be given to town centre sites, followed by edge of centre and, only then, out of centre sites in locations which are (or will be) well served by public transport."*

### ***Guidance on Methodologies for Multi Modal Studies***

- 2.11 Guidance on Methodologies for Multi Modal Studies (GOMMMS for short) published in 2000, provides guidance on the use of multi-criteria appraisal for multi modal studies (concerning transport infrastructure). It used the five main criteria set out in the Transport White Paper, and subdivides Accessibility into;
- option values (the extent to which new transport options are offered, whether or not it improves their access - e.g. a new bus route may be slower than using a car but has a 'value' if the car breaks down unexpectedly),

- severance (as new infrastructure may build barriers between local communities, or links may reduce barriers), and
- access to the transport system (meaning the public transport system).

2.12 All these three relate fairly specifically to the effects of transport infrastructure rather than land use development, though the concept of option values is of use in determining suitable locations, and new developments may have positive or negative 'severance' effects. Of more general interest is the access to the transport system where an indicator is to be used which compares accessibility before and after the new proposed changes. The indicator measures:

*the percentage of the population of who have access to a car or live within 250 m of a daytime hourly public transport service.*

2.13 This indicator is relatively simple, but uses normative criteria as to what is acceptable. Its usefulness to land use planning, in this form, does seem rather limited.

#### *The role of accessibility in the New Approach To Appraisal (in Transport)*

2.14 Care should be taken in adapting these approaches to the needs for accessibility methodologies in land use planning. Somewhat curiously the GOMMMS guidance does not appear to assess the effect that the proposals will have on access to services, concentrating, apparently equally on severance, option values, and access to the public transport system, with new roads apparently likely to add to public transport access more than new public transport in many cases. Accessibility by different modes, to opportunities, or for freight, which are key concerns in land use planning are not specifically addressed.

2.15 The new approach to appraisal leaves decisions on how to weight the various criteria involved up to decision makers, and this is one of its strengths. By doing so it offers decision makers the choice to make their own judgements as to what is important, and what is not, but by placing around 25 different criteria alongside each other it may, in practice, imply that each should be given a comparable weighting. The approach has been criticised by some who argue that aspects such as integration with other policies are key to the decision made concerning a proposal - if it is not 'policy compliant' discussion about it should end there. Similarly, others argue that for transport infrastructure the effect on accessibility is of such importance that analysis of it should be more detailed, higher profile, and proposed infrastructure that does not bring accessibility benefits should not be considered (e.g. Cohen, 2000). These points raise issues that the National Assembly may wish to consider in its treatment of the role of accessibility.

#### *Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)*

2.16 Emerging guidance currently being prepared for the Scottish Executive by Steer Davies Gleave points to some of the above concerns about GOMMMS (in relation to transport projects), and suggests the concept of "base accessibility" relating to the effect that a scheme would have on the base level of accessibility (defined in terms of those socially excluded by virtue of accessibility levels). Such an approach could be of use in terms both of determining where transport investment is needed, and in terms of land uses that should be encouraged in areas of low accessibility.

## **Scotland**

- 2.17 The principle of accessibility as the focus of transport policy was first established in Scotland in 1992 in the Government policy document Roads Traffic and Safety. This stated that: "*It is not the Government's policy to cater for all demand for transport but rather to ensure good accessibility for people and goods to all parts of Scotland.*" The document included journey time isochrones showing how travel opportunities across the country had been changing and were anticipated to change further.

### ***"Travel Choices for Scotland"***

- 2.18 The concepts described above were built upon with the publication of the Scottish Integrated Transport White Paper "Travel Choices for Scotland". This was published at the same time as "The New Deal for Transport" and "Transporting Wales into the Future" but is more prescriptive than its English counterpart, and suggests policies for different types of area, based on, in part, their accessibility characteristics. These are;

- Cities,
- Larger towns,
- Smaller towns and settlements,
- Remote communities, and
- Island communities.

- 2.19 Accessibility is treated with similar importance to English and Welsh guidance, though more special reference is made to mobility and accessibility difficulties in remote areas.

### ***National Planning Policy Guidance 17 and Planning Advice Note 57 - Transport and Planning***

- 2.20 In Scotland, the main statutory requirements for integrating land use and transport planning are set out in NPPG17 and PAN57 (Scottish Office 1999). These documents specifically identify the need for accessibility analysis as follows:

*"When selecting appropriate sites for development, "accessibility profiles" are required for public transport, walking, and cycling."*

*"Within transport assessments proposed developments should be assessed in terms of both the potential and likely accessibility for people and freight by all modes. "*

*"New developments should be accessible to bus services, with indicative guidance that 50% of new housing should be within 400 metres, and 80% within 800 metres, of a 15 minute frequency bus service, with other developments generating over 250 return trips per day being similarly accessible."*

*"Programmes of traffic management should be developed which boost the "relative accessibility" of locations by discriminating between classes of road user."*

*"The approach to parking standards should be based upon securing adequate accessibility to sites by all modes."*

2.21 This is far more prescriptive than current guidance for either England or Wales, setting out some criteria by which accessibility should be measured. To support the practical application of these requirements guidance has been developed as set out below.

***Guidance on Accessibility Measuring Techniques and their Application***

2.22 The Scottish Executive commissioned a review of accessibility measuring techniques and their application, which was published in Autumn 2000. This represents one of the few government attempts in the last twenty years to review accessibility measuring techniques for transport and land use planning. Guidance was produced for those needing to measure or indicate levels of accessibility for different purposes. The guidance suggests "Key Steps" for practical techniques to measure accessibility for:

- Accessibility by Walking and cycling,
- Public Transport Accessibility,
- Transport System Accessibility to Opportunities,
- Ratios of accessibility for different mobility groups e.g. comparisons of accessibility with and without a car, and
- Freight accessibility.

2.23 The emphasis is on simple to use methodologies that can be applied to differing levels of data availability. This report is therefore taken as a major building block for the research that this study will carry out.

### **3. THE USE OF ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY METHODOLOGIES IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

#### ***Netherlands***

- 3.1 The Netherlands has developed its 'ABC' location policy during the 1990s which specifically uses accessibility and transport characteristics of different land uses to specify what types of development are appropriate where. This method is described in more detail in Section 5, and has become very well known in land use planning circles for its innovative approach. The approach is best known for the development of high density offices and other transport intensive uses in the localities in transport interchanges in locations such as central Den Haag.
- 3.2 It is, however, also used for residential development since 1990 for which it is known as VINEX (Martens and Griethuysen, 1999). In its early formulation land for housing was allocated either because it is an 'infilling' location in the existing urban fabric, or as 'expansion' locations where accessibility criteria such as proximity to a city centre, quality public transport connections, and commuter traffic characteristics were the prime determinants. This was criticised because of its focus on proximity rather than accessibility, and has been adapted somewhat.
- 3.3 While the outside world looks to the ABC policy as a goal, many in the Netherlands have been critical of it, and it has been reviewed over the last two years or so. The result of the review has been that the overall policy is sound. However, there have been concerns that while good results have been achieved for "A" locations, there has been less success in the B and C locations, and travel patterns to these types of development have not changed towards sustainable modes sufficiently.

#### ***Germany***

- 3.4 Germany has a greater degree of federalism than most European areas with greater autonomy in its regions. Accessibility has taken a specific role in much spatial planning, especially in the designation of 81 "development centres" (Hall, 1992). This is a joint "Lander" federal project, which aims to provide the whole country with a system of service centres following the principles of Central Place Theory, explicitly based on relating service function to accessibility across a wide area (Christaller, 1929).
- 3.5 At the more local level the *Gemeinden* are responsible for control of land use, and have wide ranging powers to plan and control the implementation of development, by which they can control the supply of building land. Practically all *Gemeinden* have an "F-Plan", which is the development plan for their whole administrative area and is binding on local authorities. (Brown et al, 1999)

### **Italy**

- 3.6 At the regional level, Italy suffers from a centre-periphery problem of rapid development around the North and relative stagnation in the South more than any other European country. Hall (1992) observes that most effort has been put into this problem and that "*As even the most casual visitor to the large Italian cities must notice, the planning machinery does not seem to have been equal to the problems it had to face*" at the more local level.

### **Spain**

- 3.7 At the national and regional level there is no guidance on the use of accessibility in land use planning. However, some regional and local authorities make accessibility studies that are used in planning, generally for new transport networks or for altering existing networks.
- 3.8 Periodically, public transport and private car accessibility analyses are made for all the areas of the Madrid region. Studies are also made to assess accessibility to major trip generators. The Consorcio Regional de Transportes de Madrid (the equivalent of the PTE) and the Health Authority of the Madrid Region are working on a project related to public transport accessibility to Health Centres and hospitals of the Region. Absolute accessibility indexes are used where possible but in some cases relative accessibility has to be used (with respect to the "ideal" accessibility that would have existed with a straight network design and under perfect conditions of accessibility and circulation).
- 3.9 Accessibility studies usually contain;
- Analysis of population catchments for trip generators (hospitals, shopping centres, etc.) and/or bus stops and rail stations, etc.,
  - Analysis of journey times to trip generators and transport nodes using isochrone maps,
  - Analysis of the number of stages needed to reach locations.

### **Ireland**

- 3.10 The republic of Ireland has adopted a planning system which is very similar to that in the United Kingdom, with local authorities having Development Plans (updated every 5 years), and planning decisions being decided by the development control system. Ireland has policies of urban and rural development, which take accessibility into account, but, as in many other countries, without supporting methodologies.
- 3.11 The Local Government (Planning and Sustainable Development) Bill 2000, is currently working its way through Parliament. The Bill provides for concepts such as Integrated Area Plans and regional strategic planning. The final text may also include references to national spatial planning. If the Bill is passed, it will have a large influence on future planning and natural resource management in Ireland. The Irish Government also gave a commitment in the 2000-2006 National Development Plan to prepare a National Spatial Strategy within the context of a more balanced regional development strategy. (Department of Environment (Ireland), 2000, and Brown et al, 1999)

### **France**

- 3.12 France has adopted a more centralised approach to planning than the UK, and with an assumption of a higher proportion of public sector development than has been the case in the UK in recent years. Forward planning involves regional plans that link major developments to transport systems, with, for instance new settlements planned around new transport infrastructure. Accessibility is considered in strategic terms at this level (though not always using specific methodologies to assess accessibility).
- 3.13 Development control relies on the implementation of the PLU (*Plan Locaux d'Urbanisme*) which regulates physical land use. The equivalent of a planning permission has to be presented to the local authority in order to build or extend constructions. If a commune does not have a PLU, development rights are restricted, in such cases development is usually only permitted in already built up areas. The planning system in France has changed from being predominantly a function of the State into a process where competence is shared between the State and local authorities. The system has become more complex in recent years, and the Structure Plan and the PLU must now make provision for the participation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Agriculture and other Trade Association during the plan formulation process. (Brown et al, 1999)

### **Greece**

- 3.14 Land use planning in Greece is a responsibility of YPEHODE (Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works). The Ministry defines and controls land use, mainly approving the development plans suggested by the local authorities. Local authorities act according to their own judgement, the only constraint being laws that are relevant to their decision-making (e.g.: laws banning the construction of indoor parking areas in the historic centres of certain cities). Licences for developments are then only given for the uses already stated in the development plan.
- 3.15 Most of the planning process is concerned with facilitating car use. Accessibility comes in only in terms of requiring that the land to be used faces onto a fully constructed public road (i.e. including proper surfacing, though even this is often violated in practice). There are no concerns about the existence of public transport services. If there is no public transport serving the area, there are usually discussions between the local authorities, the community involved and the bus operator to press for their introduction. Operators, however, principally act in their own interest, since there are no regulations controlling routes, areas of service etc.

### **Denmark**

- 3.16 Due to a number of reasons, not least the relatively late urbanisation and industrialisation of their centres (Hall, 1992), Scandinavian countries have well developed city-region planning systems. There is a higher degree of public control over where development takes place than in the United Kingdom.
- 3.17 The 1948 'Finger' plan for Copenhagen based future development around transport corridors out of the centre, which would provide good accessibility to the centre for new development. Between these fingers a form of Green Belt would operate in the less

accessible areas. Following a faster than expected urban growth thinking in the 1960s suggested the idea of 'city sections'. These were self contained settlements along the corridors already developed, with high speed access public transport to the city centre for those would not both live and work in the new 'city sections', although debate about these proposals slowed their development. In the 1970s the idea of Transportation corridors involving both radial and orbital public transport corridors emerged - again with a strong emphasis on accessibility for the location of new development. The policy is described in Hall (1992) and in Hermannsson (1999).

- 3.18 A goal of locating development near to stations is the main accessibility criteria used in land use planning in Denmark. This goal had been established regional policy for a number of years, but new location of business development seemed to counteract its effect. A study of location patterns for the Copenhagen region has found that regional authorities were lacking in "concentration" efforts, around existing urban zones, and specifically in locations near to stations.
- 3.19 Less than half of new development in years 1990-94, and correspondingly in a projection period up to 2000, happened or was expected to happen according to the goal set. This was clear for business developments and also - but less so - for housing. Efforts are being made to regulate shopping centres in edge of town locations.
- 3.20 The general planning framework quite closely resembles that of the UK. Every Commune (municipality) has to have a Commune plan showing where development should take place. A criticism of these is that they do not take account of neighbouring areas and thus suggest more land available than is needed, and, as a result, the 'steering' capability of the plan is reduced. Developers are able to choose from a very wide range of locations, so much development can, and does, take place in unsuitable locations.
- 3.21 The Danes often tend to be very self critical, possibly arising from the common sense and thought that they apply to their actions, and the level of open public debate in public affairs. These comments should be read in that light, having been provided by personal communication.

### ***Sweden***

- 3.22 Like Denmark, Sweden formulated an early post war strategic city region plan for its capital, Stockholm. The 1952 plan was based around development at stations on an underground railway system radiating from several interchange stations in the city centre. Additionally, to avoid the urban sprawl that London had experienced in the 1920s following London Underground development, the new suburbs were planned on the principle of local pyramids of density. This allowed for higher housing densities around the stations, which would also become centres for shopping and other activities, according to a hierarchical principle. Thus walking and public transport accessibility were formulated as a conscious part of the plans. Centres were planned as "C" centres to serve populations of 10-15,000 people within walking distance, and "B" centres serving 15-30,000 people within walking distance and more by the underground system. Hall (1998) later commented that this plan was not wholly successful because of higher than expected car acquisition, showing that accessibility cannot determine travel behaviour.

## **Finland**

- 3.23 With the population density that Finland has, accessibility seems less of a concern than in many other countries, though it is apparent that thoughts on accessibility pervade land use planning exactly because of the large distances that would be involved with a 'badly sited' development. But like other northern European countries the role of a plan led system has been strong, with proactive land use planning and major public building the norm for urban expansion. Coupled with this, the traditional right of landowners to build on their land has led to much unplanned low density suburban expansion.
- 3.24 Finland has recently changed its land use planning system with its Land Use and Building Act of 1999. This gives local authorities more extensive powers, with land use plans no longer needing approval by the central government Ministry of the Environment. Local Authorities can define special 'areas of planning need', which are mostly on the periphery of more densely built up areas where "building under isolated individual decisions would prejudice planned expansion of the community".
- 3.25 Accessibility does not take a major role in written aims of policy, though it is implicit in many aspects of policy such as in-filling in urban areas rather than expansion, and concern for the closures of local facilities.

### ***Accessibility in land use planning in European Countries - Summary***

- 3.26 Most countries adopt a system of land use planning that has broad similarities to that in the UK with some form of strategic planning, and with applications by developers fitting in to a greater or lesser extent with that plan. There are differing degrees to which the plan, or applications are the predominant force. The incorporation of accessibility, as in the UK, is generally done in a relatively "common sense" manner with relative accessibility taken to accord to broad factors of location such as "town centre", "suburban", or "on a public transport corridor".
- 3.27 In terms of methodologies used, isochrones, or travel times to key locations are the only indicators generally used. Where accessibility is quantified it is nearly always accessibility to or of transport networks that is considered. Some systems, such as the Dutch ABC policy use a simple form of multi-criteria approach to answering a series of questions relating to the accessibility of locations and matching these accessibility criteria with the mobility needs of development. Others use simple criteria such as developing in areas close to railway stations and other high quality public transport infrastructure. Some do not appear to consider accessibility at all in the ways which are currently being discussed as important in land use planning in Wales.