



Comhshaol, Oidhreacht agus Rialtas Áitiúil
Environment, Heritage and Local Government



14 December 2010

Circular Letter PSSP 8 - 2010

To: County and City Managers,
Directors of Service for Planning,
Town Clerks,
Chief Officer, An Bord Pleanála

Re: Development plans – determination of national plans, policies and strategies to be of relevance to proper planning and sustainable development

A chairde,

Section 9(6) of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 provides that:

"A development plan shall in so far as is practicable be consistent with such national plans, policies or strategies as the Minister determines relate to proper planning and sustainable development."

Further to his previous determination in August regarding other relevant national policy documents, Minister of State Ciarán Cuffe, T.D., to whom responsibility for planning functions has been delegated, has now determined that the National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020, published by the Department of Transport under the Government's new transport policy, Smarter Travel - A Sustainable Transport Future, is a national policy that relates to proper planning and sustainable development under section 9(6).

The policy framework document highlights, *inter alia*, the importance of addressing the needs of cyclists in the preparation and implementation of all national, regional, local and sub-local plans and in integrating cycle-friendly considerations into transportation infrastructure plans and designs



Cycling-friendly urban planning principles reiterate many elements of the Department's 2009 Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas and the accompanying Urban Design Manual, and include:

- (1) the need to ensure that development plans deliver compact urban developments that minimise travel distances;
- (2) maximising the permeability of urban areas (avoiding the necessity for pedestrians and cyclists to make long detours); and
- (3) integrating the needs of cyclists and pedestrians into development management and development planning to create high-quality and seamless cycle and pedestrian networks

For a development plan to be consistent with the National Cycle Policy Framework, it must set out specific objectives and policies that will encourage people to use the bicycle for all travel purposes, to ensure that the proportion of people walking and cycling as a proportion of all traffic movements will grow and to enable the creation of safe, efficient and attractive networks of cycle routes, especially within urban areas.

The preparatory stages of development plans should therefore include an analysis of the proportion of people travelling by bicycle in the area of the plan, consultation with cycle users and the identification of the objectives and policies mentioned above.

Moreover, as stated in the Department's previous August 2010 circular in this context, sustainable land use and transport policy objectives have a central role in helping to achieve wider Government policy objectives in relation to economic recovery, modal shift changes, cleaner air conditions, and reduced dependence on imported energy

Copies of the National Cycle Policy Framework document is available for download from the Smarter Travel website - www.smartertravel.ie

Queries in relation to the National Cycle Policy Framework should be directed to Ronnie Devlin or Clare Finnegan of the National Sustainable Transport Office, Department of Transport, Kildare Street, Dublin 2 (Tel: 1890 44 33 11)

Mise le meas,



David Walsh
Principal Officer
Planning System and Spatial Policy