



Dedicated busway, Leeds



This automatic bus gate, Cambridge, ensures bus priority



Bus-underground interchange, Canning Town, London

When it's too far to walk or cycle the best alternative to the car within an urban area is generally the bus. The movement framework for new development should provide for a direct bus route, or failing that easy access to an existing route. Discussions with potential operators will identify what kind of service can be provided and the type of bus to be used.

4.3.1 PUBLIC TRANSPORT CATCHMENTS

The people on the bus

A bus route will be viable if there are enough people within a 400m radius (5 minutes walk) of each stop. If bus stops are at 200-300m intervals, a density of around 80 persons per hectare will provide a catchment of 2,000 people per stop: 100 people per hectare provides up to 2,500 people per stop. Densities much below 80 people per hectare may not be attractive to bus operators. Bus routes also need to be direct, rather than forming a contorted series of loops and dead ends. Table 4.1 shows the ideal catchment per stop for different kinds of public transport. There are few schemes that will justify a light rail system or tram, and even fewer that will merit a new railway station. But where these already exist, links to these facilities should be strengthened. Disused railway routes should not be built over to retain the future possibility of retrofitting.

Table 4.1 Catchment areas for public transport

	Minibus	Bus	Guided bus	Light rail	Rail
Stop interval	200m	200m	300m	600m	1,000m+
Corridor width / area served	800m	800m	800m	1,000m	2,000m+
Catchment per stop	320-640	480-1,760	1,680-3,120	4,800-9,000	24,000-

4.3.2 BUS PROVISION

Make it convenient to catch the bus

Even if there are potentially enough people in an area to make a service viable it still needs to be made attractive. What matters most are:

- clear, direct routes to the bus stop, including well-placed crossings on major roads;
- locating bus stops where activity takes place, near shops or a road junction. Ideally a stop should be close to the centre of a place;
- provision of effectively policed bus lanes and bus priority at junctions.



Before: Congestion involving buses is concentrated in one area



After: Reducing the number of lanes and dedicating some of the road-space as a bus lane and a widened footway enlivens the western end of the street and ensures pedestrian and public transport priority.