

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL, 10 SEPTEMBER 2013

Bath Transport Strategy

Henry Brown, Chairman of FoBRA. We represent 27 separate residents' associations in central and outer areas of Bath.

Regularly ask our member associations what they think FoBRA should do, and transport, pollution & congestion always come out top.

Welcome the work that the Council is doing on a transport strategy, indeed we claim credit for persuading them to do this.

However, we do have some reservations about the work described in the paper:

- It is asking consultants to gather information towards drafting a strategy. It isn't clear who is to draft the strategy itself. The consultants need to be clear whether this is their job, or whether a separate stage is to follow.
- We don't see how a strategy can be drafted unless there is an underlying vision for the actions to deliver. This isn't something for outsiders to recommend. The Council should have talked to stakeholders in Bath, and drawn up an agreed vision on something like the following lines:
 - *An economically vibrant city with sustainable development as set out in the Core Strategy.*
 - *A city centre (this could be the BID area) free of all but essential traffic.*
 - *Public Realm and Movement Strategy delivered.*
 - *Key Elements of the World Heritage Site protected from traffic and pollution.*
 - *Enhanced quality of life and wellbeing for those who live in, work in and visit Bath.*
 - *Air quality better than statutory pollution limits*
 - *Reduced congestion and free movement on the designated through route (London Road - Bathwick Street – Pulteney Road – Lower Bristol Road).*

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➤ *Public transport attractive enough to get people out of their cars.*

- Looking at the work commissioned, the most important paragraphs i and ii request an assessment of future developments. This isn't enough. Existing congestion and pollution need to be assessed and tackled as well.
- Paragraph viii talks about reviewing previous work on an Eastern Park & Ride. We don't need is more time-wasting reviews on this. Instead the Council should give a clear commitment to get on and build it without further delay.

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Draft Bath Car Parking Strategy

Welcome the Council's work on this. As paper makes clear parking is an essential element of transport policy. Every parking space encourages vehicle movements to and from it. So if we are serious about reducing congestion and pollution in Bath, parking in the city centre must be progressively restricted, and every sustainable alternative to the private car, particularly Park & Ride, must be encouraged.

I have some detailed comments:

- Appendix 1. The graph on bus journeys shows little or no growth, even against a modest target of 1.5%. Bus services need to be made attractive enough to get people out of their cars.
- Parking controls, last bullet point. The Council needs to recognise that 10,000 people live in Abbey & Kingsmead wards in the centre of Bath. This is not a small handful. Many of us do without a private car – I use the car club myself. But those who do need a car are very badly served by residents' parking – only one permit per household, as against two elsewhere, and often real difficulty in finding a space. We welcome Action A2, to review provision, and demand that residents should be given priority over visitors.
- Principle P1. The principle of squeezing out central parking in favour of Park & Ride must not be allowed to be watered down.
- Action A5. Fully support development of eastern Park & Ride. Should be implemented without more delay.
- Action A6. Given the desire for later opening of Park & Ride, why is this not being implemented now? It would need to be accompanied by physical security measures, as customers may not feel comfortable about leaving their vehicles in the later evening.