

Statement to B&NES Cabinet Meeting 14.09.11 from Gary Dando, RAG Committee Member

**REF: Norton Radstock Regeneration TROs Executive Forward Plan
Reference: E2291**

I have a number of issues regarding this report (pp.111-130 Cabinet Papers).

Page 112 Item Corporate Priorities

Building communities where people feel safe and secure plus Improving transport and the public realm

This report does not fulfil the above aspirations.

I do not agree with answers given to objections 2,3,4,6 for the following reasons:

1. This road plan points to a serious flaw in the traffic analysis carried out on behalf of Bellway the then developer. It is six years since this study was carried out
2. The Highway Agency has issued new guidelines for mini-roundabouts ref. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) August 2007, section TD54/07 Part 2, Chapter 2. This sets the standard for trunk roads but should also be relevant to the mini-roundabout at the junction of A367 and the Street because of the volume of traffic handled including more heavy goods now, because of weight restrictions on Cleveland Bridge, Bath.
3. Para 2.7 of the manual states the use of mini-roundabouts is not recommended at or near junctions where turns in or out of side roads are prohibited.
This is because drivers do not expect to see vehicles u-turning on mini-roundabouts. The exit from Fortescue Road is left turn only requiring all Midsomer Norton and Bath bound vehicles to u-turn on the mini-roundabout. This is unsafe for road users as indicated in this manual
4. B&NES maintains that there is no evidence that vibrations from vehicles cause structural damage to buildings. In this case, why are they restricting traffic over Pulteney Bridge and Cleveland Bridge and through traffic in front of the Royal Crescent, Bath etc?

Attachment to Statement by Gary Dando

Excerpts from a Report

A professional report on the road proposals states that they point 'to a serious flaw in the traffic analysis carried out on behalf of Bellway, the then developer. The time that has elapsed, six years, since the traffic study was carried out, is also cause for concern.

In the meantime, the Highway Agency has issued new guidelines for mini-roundabout design. (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges August 2007 Section TD 54/07 Pt 2 Chapter 2.) This sets the standard for trunk roads, but should also be relevant to this junction because of the volumes of traffic handled. The new standards look more demanding with increased emphasis on the safety of two-wheeled vehicles.

Para 2.7 of the manual states: 'The use of mini-roundabouts is not recommended at or near junctions where turns in or out of side roads are prohibited. This is because drivers do not expect to see vehicles u-turning on mini-roundabouts.' The exit from Fortescue Road is left turn only requiring all Midsomer Norton and Bath direction vehicles to u-turn on the A367/Street roundabout. The phrase 'accident waiting to happen' springs to mind.

Para 2.10 of the manual states: the designer must 'assess the lengths of queues likely to be generated do not adversely affect the operation or safety of adjacent highway features'. However, the traffic modelling carried out for Bellway was apparently done taking each new highway feature in complete isolation from the other changes. No attempt was made to model the knock on effects of each component on the others.

What is clear from the modelling carried out is that the new road system will increase the traffic in Wells Road by 50% increasing the difficulty of crossing the road.

The traffic analysis carried out for Bellway is based on observed traffic flows in 2005. The world has changed since then, traffic and vehicle ownership have grown and not necessarily proportionately. Traffic counts from B&NES some time ago suggested traffic on the Frome Road was growing faster than Bath-bund traffic. B&NES Council is trying to divert through HGVs from Bath. Some vehicles already come this way because of the congestion in Bath at certain times of the day. This diverted east west traffic can realistically only travel via the M4 or via Frome Road and Radstock. Because the traffic analysis was done so long ago, when objecting to the planning application, we should ask that the counts be retaken.

It is also worth noting that granting planning permission is premature because land assembly is incomplete.