

Radstock Action Group

The new road proposals are a step in the right direction But the heart of Radstock is still at risk

B&NES has published its latest proposals for Radstock. The most eye-catching change is that Frome Road will not be closed. So you could be excused for thinking that this addresses most of the points that everyone had objected to previously.

Keeping Frome Road open is certainly to be welcomed but, unfortunately, it is not the whole story and it doesn't solve many of the key objections to the proposals.

Under the latest proposals:

- The new link road between Frome Road and the Victoria Hall is still in the plans.
- The Street will still have two-way traffic.
- Fortescue Road traffic will still run in the opposite direction to present.
- All traffic exiting Fortescue Road will still have to turn left regardless of where it wants to go.
- Parking spaces will still be lost.
- Traffic from Wells Hill going to Haydon or the town centre will still have to negotiate a right turn at the bottom of the hill, on a new roundabout.
- Royal Mail vehicles using the Sorting Office will still not be able to access their depot or park outside.
- Only vehicles up to 7.5 tonnes will be allowed on the proposed new link road.

Other new problems arise from the latest proposals:

- All buses will have to use Frome Road either on their way to Bath or other destinations.
- The introduction of a substantial number of pedestrian crossings, largely made necessary by the new road system, will result in parking being further restricted outside shops and Hope House, as parking on zigzags is not allowed.
- All road vehicles including cyclists will have to negotiate 'raised tables' for the full length of the proposed new link road which will also have an island down the middle.

The result of all the above will:

- Fortescue Road will be difficult to reach as drivers will either have to come down the Street and turn left very sharply (not possible for bigger vehicles) or will have to come from Frome Road end across the proposed new link road, through the bus stops and then take a right at a new mini-roundabout at the meeting of The Street and the proposed new link road. Traffic from Haydon will be *relatively* well off as all it will need to do is cross the roundabout
- The Street with two-way traffic will become a heavily noise and air-polluted environment which will deter shoppers. Parking will be very difficult and with the new crossing is likely to prevent anyone parking outside Hope House. Deliveries will be difficult. There will be increased traffic, including multi-axle trucks travelling in both directions.
- Traffic fumes and vibration will pose a threat to the conservation area including the Victoria Hall
- Traffic turning right into the Street from Wells Hill will pose a danger as the new roundabout at the junction of The Street and Wells Hill will require tight turns on a steep slope which will be particularly difficult in poor weather conditions
- In a distance of roughly 60 metres, traffic between Frome Road and Hope House will encounter two roundabouts, bus stops on both sides of a raised table and three zebra crossings

B&NES says that:

- There will be lower traffic flows on The Street
- There will be significant journey time savings

But we are not convinced:

- B&NES claims that, by 2016, a journey in peak evening traffic between the Camerton turn off on the A367 and Cypress Terrace (up west Hill) will take 3 minutes 40 seconds. They say it takes 9 minutes 20 seconds at present. We question both these times. To do the journey in 3 minutes 40 seconds, we calculate that you'd have to average over 40mph and this includes passing through the centre of Radstock which will have a 20 mph speed limit – this is just one example.
- We approve of lowering speed limits as necessary but we wonder whether traffic at peak times will really need a 20mph as it will more than likely be in traffic queues.
- The town centre will be less user-friendly especially for many disabled people and those with buggies and small children.
- How can there be lower traffic flows on the Street when it will be two-way as opposed to one-way?
- Extra roundabouts will do nothing to reduce congestion. Is the solution to the congestion caused by the double mini roundabout to insert yet another roundabout?
- Access to Fortescue Road will be more difficult for traffic coming from three of the five main roads that come into Radstock town centre (i.e. Bath New Road, Somervale Rd and Wells Rd) Even traffic from Frome Rd would have to make a right turn across two-way traffic to enter Fortescue Rd if the flow is reversed.
- B&NES claims 40 new jobs will be created, but how many will be lost?

Questions for B&NES

- **Why is the new link road necessary now that the Frome Road is staying open?**
- Previously B&NES argued that this was all for the new NRR housing development. Now they are justifying it on the grounds that it will improve journey times and reduce congestion. What is the real reason?
- Councillor Crossley, leader of B&NES, has said there will be no road unless the housing happens. So why this haste when the housing has not been agreed?
- Wouldn't the money be better spent on positive improvements to the town?
- Why can't the road system stay as it is? It's not perfect but it's certainly better than the proposals?
- Where are the 40 new jobs coming from?