

Annie's Speech for Full Council Meeting 15 September 2016

Council Leader, Before I start – please have to hand the single page map I left on chairs.

1. Good evening. I too am here tonight because I am concerned that you do not have a clear or balanced set of evidence before you to make a decision about a potential East P&R. Please listen with an open mind to what I have to say.
2. The Council has acknowledged that an East of Bath Park & Ride won't ease congestion or pollution, yet air pollution shortens the lives of more than 50,000 people a year and the latest UWE research out this month tells us that the existing vehicle fleet is being replaced so slowly that reduced vehicle use is the only sure way to bring about improvement in air quality. All the time we prioritise road users, the implications for social equity are immense because households in poorer areas suffer more air pollution, while contributing less to the problem.
3. Back in 2009, Motts looked at the impact on air quality if a P&R were built on Site F. They decided to consider the cumulative impact on air quality not just of an Eastern P & R, but of other elements of the BTP, such as extensions to Newbridge. The implication seems to have been that sacrificial areas of worsened air quality could be tolerated if there were net improvements elsewhere. As a concept, legally questionable, for residents in worsened areas, quite possibly morally repugnant.
4. But let's stick with it for a moment, however flawed the theory might have been, what they actually modelled is quite interesting. See the chart in front of you. Orange means the existing AQMA, Green means things get better with the BTP in place, red means it gets worse. What must jump out at you, is just how much red Motts drew around Bathampton and Batheaston, with a presumed park and ride in place on Site F.
5. Fast forward 7 years. NO2 readings have gone from 33 to 38 in parts of Batheaston. 2015 figures will be artificially depressed, in part by the lengthy closure of the A36 last year but mostly by the legally inexcusable change in the choice of bias applied to the raw readings, which have seen NO2 levels tumbling across the whole City, without any improvement in the underlying raw data. With the real figures as your new baseline, what must Motts modelling show second time around? The results can only be worse.
6. So please, spend your £12 million on affordable, equally accessible to all public transport, and a real commitment to active travel. Please don't hide behind manufactured statistics to magic this problem away; we are part of a national air quality problem of epidemic proportions.

