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Speech to Council - 15 September 2016

Like my colleagues, I too am concerned that you have clear and balanced evidence before you make your decision on a P & R. Please listen carefully to what I have to say.

It has been clear to us for a long time, there is NO substantiated case for an East P & R. In the Chronicle the Council agrees - it says "the Council hopes that an East P & R will ease future congestion".

The question remains, by how much and when?

For no answer to this can be found in any Council report, and the Council cannot even tell us how much demand there will be for this P&R in the next 3-5 years.

The Mott McDonald report, published this Spring only gives a demand figure for 2029 - 13 years away – and how accurate/credible is that?

Also:---

Empirical Council evidence clearly shows that the highest demand for P & R is at midday - yet the Mott report projects it to be at 4.00 in the afternoon. There is NO explanation for this change! The pattern of use of the current P & R's has not changed in 5 years. What magic brings this new pattern about. If it is based on assumptions, you know what happens when you ASS U ME.

Will changes in City Centre parking places lead to this pattern? Well no, their use follows the same pattern as the P & R's, so the pattern in the Mott report is perverse.

Also, and with no explanation the Mott report projects an increase of 900% in the use of the RUH buses. Where on earth did that come from! The healthcare trend is to treat closer to home, and the RUH have just increased their parking by 300 places! Not only that the RUH had no input into these forecasts.

You may hear officials saying that "all bases are covered" as they are using Webtag, the process used to seek funds for projects such as this. That could not be further from the truth. The first stage of the process is

to produce a paper assessing the best solution. Pretty fundamental really, but have you seen this paper? We have not seen it! We don't think it exists!

Even the planning inspector, as part of the place holding plan review, has asked "what other options have you considered?". BANES response is:

- A new railway station based P & R
- Continuing to encourage transfer to existing bus services
- Support for improved rail services

That's all,,,,,,? Where is:

- Enhancing public bus services
- Funding quality bus corridors
- Properly quantifying and tackling the school run
- Creating proper, safe corridors for cyclists
- Congestion charging
- Charging for work place parking
- Working with businesses to explore flexible/home working
- and so on.....

All in all quite pitiful and certainly not a credit to the City of Bath.

We have challenged and discredited the need for a P & R time and time again, and yet still more attempts are being made to justify it. It is not needed.

As you consider your decision on this controversial topic make sure you are very clear about the actual facts. You are in danger of making a decision with the wool pulled over your eyes.

I urge you protect to our heritage, don't concrete over our - Bath's Green Belt.