

Andrew Mercer statement

I am here tonight because I am concerned that you are still not listening.

Last November I wrote to you with my concern that you were about to take an unlawful decision to put 1400 P&R spaces on Bathampton meadows.

I was concerned that a decision at that time would not have been supported by policy or evidence and that because of this you could not make a reasonable decision that would withstand legal challenge.

I told you that as a businessman I could never take such an important decision without a business case and that I certainly could not raise finance on this basis.

So what has changed?

Well quite a lot, you now accept that

- P&R is not as popular as you believed – you have lots of spare capacity
- congestion and emissions will not improve in the future with or without more P&R
- an east P&R will only take 5% of traffic off the London Road in the morning peak
- You now have evidence that you don't need anything like 1400 spaces to the east – and in fact may not need an east P&R at all

And what has not changed?

- You still have not asked anyone whether they would use an east of bath P&R, so don't have a reliable forecast of demand from the east
- As far as we know you still don't have a business plan so cant raise finance, and
- You still don't have policy – The planning inspector is in town considering if a P&R to the east is justified and if it is okay to make a planning application for a site to the east when the location this is not specified in the place making plan.

YOU ABSOLUTELY CANNOT make any decision until she has reported back – and that is not expected until December at the earliest.

Now that you agree with the BMA on so many fronts is it not time to begin a genuine dialogue as we requested last February and deliver something that we can all support.