

Judy Bailey Speech to Cabinet 25.1.17

Good evening Councillors

I am talking about the mitigation proposed for the environmental and economic disaster you are deciding to build on the Bathampton Meadows, in the face of considerable public opposition.

This is from the council's 'The East of Bath Park and Ride Background Information' document.

'The Council takes the issue of visual impact very seriously.' (it reads) *'As such, every effort will be made as part of any planning application to mitigate, as far is as reasonable to do so, the visual impact of the site which is finally selected.'*

In an attempt to assuage residents concerns so-say 'reassuring' photo-shopped mock-ups of the new park and ride have been circulated on the council's Twitter feed and in the Bath Chronicle, from this document. The views are shown from Little Solsbury, Bathampton Down and... Fairfield Park.....??? Where are the images from Batheaston, Bathampton and Bathford?

In what seems to be refreshing honesty, the brand new car park is shown with the cars and tarmac clearly visible. This in contrast with 15 years time in which undoubtedly there has been some kind of apocalypse and nature has reclaimed the site to such an extent that there is a forest of sequoia trees thriving in a tropical microclimate.

I see from the plans that site F's smaller car park/ forest is in fact a 25 foot strip of green nearest to Batheaston on the plan. Along with all 800 cars, it has cycle storage, a cycle path, it has 4 electric vehicle charging points. Verily, it would appear to be a triumph for sustainability.

Site B's (800 space) plans are designed with a strip of green around and between the car-parking spaces. Again, very hard to see how this will result in the promised paradise in the visuals.

But! The plan for site F (1200) spaces has none of these features. There is no miraculous forest planned for this option, no matter what the council's incredible images would lead us to believe. They haven't attempted to publish the visual impact of this one in 15 years time.

Guess which one I suspect we are about to get. Here's a clue... it's the much larger one without the tree planting.

But in any case...not to worry!

(We are told) the remainder of Site F offers the potential for significant landscape and biodiversity mitigation; the local community could be involved in developing a new riverside country park.'

Again, we are being asked to believe that nature will be even better with the car park. We know you are planning a link road and a freight consolidation centre. So don't pretend that this is one happy clappy scheme for hedgehog housing with excited children pond dipping for newts.

I want to highlight the noise pollution and increased air pollution in the valley; light pollution by night, sun shining off the cars in the day. And what about the winter when the leaves fall off the trees? These have not been addressed by the council, the reason being that there is no mitigation for these.

I can assure you that when the boundaries change to include the villages to the east of Bath, it will be remembered which political party borrowed and wasted public money (what are we up to now? 21 million pounds?) at the same time as cutting vital public services, and that local councillors should be aware that we are looking very closely at which way you vote....