

B&NES Council Meeting – May 19th 2011
Bath Transportation Package
Representation made by Steve Mackerness

Following from Dr Dunlop's representation, I would now like to address two matters, viz. the poor air quality in the city, and the need to reduce congestion on the main A4 London Road.

With regard to air quality, the much-discussed reduction of HGVs from the Cleveland Bridge should be a major objective. The B&NES Cabinet have voiced support for such an initiative in the past. Let us grasp the nettle – and get on with it! The lion's share of pollutants is from these large trucks. Any other solution could never come close to this in terms of cost effectiveness. A simple ban on HGVs from the A36 would achieve a huge improvement in air quality.

With regard to the congestion along the London Road, the BTP envisaged a new P&R site at Bathampton Meadows. This site has been shown, however, to NOT address any of the three objectives as described by the previous speaker. According to B&NES planners (not my conclusions, but yours), it will not reduce congestion, nor improve air quality, and has catastrophic consequences for the Green Belt setting of the WHS. If it doesn't satisfy any of its objectives, then surely it makes sense to look for a solution which does.

...Build a P&R in a declivity on Charmy Down on the site of a WWII airfield. We have spoken about this possibility many times before, but for the benefit of new Councillors - please consider the following merits.

- a) Firstly, it has no constraints on size. It will, therefore, reduce congestion on the London Road, and thereby improve air quality. Very importantly, it could cope with all traffic arriving from the north and so the expansion of the P&R site at Lansdown could be eliminated. Not required.
- b) With B&NES latest estimates on arrival rates, it is also clear that the majority of potential users will actually drive straight past its entrance.
- c) Traffic approaching Bath along the A4 from Chippenham or the A363 from Bradford could use the site at the cost of a 2.1 mile diversion – which incidentally is less than the diversion that many of these drivers use today, employing a rat-run through Swainswick, Larkhall and Camden Terrace.
- d) Christmas traffic, tourist coaches and special events can easily be accommodated.

In summary, I suggest that the following comprehensive plan (incorporating the ideas of Dr Dunlop and myself) could provide a revised BTP:

- a) All of the low cost alternatives;
 - b) Much increased provision of school bus services;
 - c) Expansion of Odd Down P&R as originally planned;
 - d) Replacement of the BRT with conventional P&R buses;
 - e) Expansion of Newbridge P&R on its original site south of the river;
 - f) Ban on HGVs along the A36 road into Bath;
 - g) Replacement of the proposed new P&R at Bathampton and the expansion of Lansdown P&R – with a new P&R site at Charmy Down;
-and all complemented by vigorous promotion of rail expansion to improve services from Chippenham to Bath.

The cost of this package would be less than half of the current BTP, and would stand a much improved chance of attracting funding in this difficult fiscal environment.

You may have been told that significant alterations to the original scheme would result in the BTP being disqualified from further consideration. This is not true (by clear statements from the DfT).

Please accord this set of measures full consideration and insist on the BTP being amended prior to our final bid to the DfT for funding. If you fail to do so, I suggest that you will be putting at risk all hopes of DfT financial support, and thereby eliminating funding possibilities for many years to come.

Thank you.