

Chapter 12: New Communities

Section: West of Waterlooville MDA (Proposal NC2)

Response Note and rebuttal of the evidence submitted by B Bateman on behalf of Havant Borough Council.

OBJECTION TO REVISED DEPOSIT WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Proposal/ Paragraph	Representation Number	NAME	STATUS
RD 12.13 &12.38	2117/6/REVDEP;	Havant Borough Council	OBJECT

ISSUES

1. Does the successful integration of the MDA and Waterlooville Town Centre depend upon the closure of Maurepas Way (south) to vehicular traffic and the subsequent major development as set out in Havant Drawing No. LP49/31C?
2. To what extent are there alternatives to the complete closure of Maurepas Way, and what are the likely consequences in urban design terms?
3. What would be the likely impact on the MDA of re-routing traffic currently using Maurepas Way?

CITY COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The principle of integrating the Major Development Area (MDA) West of Waterlooville with the town centre at Waterlooville is not at issue. It is a requirement of the Hampshire County Structure Plan Review (HCSPR) Policy MDA2 (**CD 5.1**), which requires the MDA to be 'focused on, and be integrated with, Waterlooville town centre as a district centre'.
- 1.2 In paragraph 125 of the same policy it states that 'the focus on Waterlooville will provide sufficient justification and impetus for further improvements to the town centre'.
- 1.3 The requirement for the proper integration of the MDA with Waterlooville town centre is recognised in Policy NC2 (vi) in the Winchester District Local Plan Review.

1.4 The issue is therefore what measures are necessary to achieve this fundamental aim of integration. In this context it would be expected that any measures to integrate the MDA with the existing town centre would be reasonable and proportionate, and while paragraph 125 recognises the potential to secure improvements to the town centre it does not explicitly state that it expected that the MDA will directly provide those improvements.

1.5 In order to secure the integration of West of Waterlooville with the MDA Havant Borough Council are proposing that the spine road within the MDA be up-graded to accommodate the traffic currently using Maurepas Way, and that Maurepas Way is closed in order to facilitate a major redevelopment and extension of the town centre. This would involve the relocation of the existing Asda Superstore. It is the opinion of Winchester City Council that this goes further than is necessary to secure the successful integration of the MDA with the town centre and would cause significant harm to the MDA.

1.6 Havant's proposed amendments to Policy NC2 in the Local Plan Review are therefore:-

- Proposed Amendment to paragraph RD 12.13; Option A: Amend Inset Map 41 to show the indicative alignment of the internal road network and access points (Main and south) which will cater for the traffic resulting from the closure of Maurepas Way (south).
- Option B: Amend Inset Map 41 to show the indicative alignment of the internal road network and access points (main, new (on the A3 in the vicinity of Mill Road) and south).
- Proposed amendment to paragraph RD 12.38; The main access road and internal road network will be designed to accommodate the traffic directed from the closure of Maurepas Way (south) in order to facilitate the integration of the MDA with Waterlooville Town Centre.

Or if the Inspector does not recommend either of the above options:-

- Proposed amendment to paragraph RD 12.13 (v); The completion of appropriate roads including:- Traffic calming measures for the southern section of Maurepas Way (south) to facilitate the integration of the proposed development with Waterlooville Town Centre.

1.7 In order to implement HCSPR Policy MDA 2 and take forward and develop the concept of the MDA, the West of Waterlooville Forum was established. The genesis of the Forum, its composition, and the process of delineating the boundaries and preparation of a Masterplan Framework for the MDA are set out in topic Paper 6 (**CD 21.6**).

2. Issue 1. Does the successful integration of the MDA and Waterlooville Town Centre depend upon the closure of Maurepas Way (south) to vehicular traffic and the subsequent major development as set out in the Havant Drawing No. LP49/31C (Appendix 10 to the Proof of evidence produced by B Bateman on behalf of Havant Borough Council)?

2.1 While the integration of the MDA with the town centre of Waterlooville is a fundamental aim of HCSPR Policy MDA2, the required level of integration and the means to achieve it are not specified. There is no requirement for a major extension of the town centre to facilitate the integration.

2.2 The preferred option of Havant District Council is set out in their drawing LP 49/31C. This shows Maurepas Way closed and laid out as a public square with Asda being relocated to the west of the existing road. In addition an unspecified amount of additional retail units are proposed together with a 100 bedroom hotel; 111 flats; commercial and leisure uses; a restaurant, two drive through restaurants a travel lodge and a health club. The front of the re-located store would be approximately 300 metres from the main shopping area in London Road, with the car park further beyond that.

2.3 The status of this drawing is unclear. The Havant Borough District- Wide Local Plan 1996-2011 does not propose such a radical extension to the town centre. In the first deposit draft of the Plan a proposal was put forward to extend the Asda superstore on it's existing site (HBD-WLP Policy WTC 12), the justification for this was that 'the existing superstore generates a high proportion of linked shopping trips and therefore strengthening it's role as one of the principal food stores in the town centre will be encouraged'. However this policy was deleted from the Revised Deposit Draft, which is silent on the future of Asda.

2.4 The Revised Deposit Draft of the Havant Local Plan, makes no mention of a major extension of the town centre, and to remove the existing superstore to the location proposed in Drawing LP 49/31C would take it outside of the defined area of the town centre (as delineated on the Revised Deposit Proposals Map), and onto land identified in the Proposals Map as being allocated for recreation and leisure (HBD-WLP Policy WTC 17).

2.5 Planning Policy Guidance note 6 (**CD 1.4**) in paragraph 1.6 -1.7 requires local plans to identify sites for retail development. The preferred location for additional retail is within established town centres. Before an alternative to a town centre location is proposed it must be demonstrated that 'all potential town centre options have been thoroughly assessed before less central sites are considered for development for key town centre uses' (paragraph 1.10).

2.6 Furthermore all applications for retail development over 2,500 sq metres should be supported by evidence on whether the sequential approach has been adopted; its accessibility by all modes of transport; its likely economic impact; and any significant environmental impacts (paragraph 4.13).

2.7 In Policy S3 of HCSPR, in accordance with the provisions of PPG6, it states that ' in allocating sites for retail development in local plans, local planning authorities will ensure that, where possible all types of retail development locate within town centres or, where suitable town centres are not available on edge of centre sites. In assessing the scope for further retail development the following factors will be taken into account:

- i) the scale, location and choice of existing shopping facilities, their use and function and the likely impact of new retail development on their vitality and viability;
- ii) the requirement for different types of shopping provision;
- iii) the results of monitoring the supply and take up of retail floor space; and
- iv) current retail market trends and retailer requirements.

2.8 No evidence has been put forward to confirm that Havant has undertaken any of the testing required by PPG 6 or HCSPR policy S3 to demonstrate the acceptability of re-locating a significant retail use from within the town centre, and a use which is important for linked trips, to a location further away from the established retail core, on the edge of the centre. Nor has any evidence been put forward to demonstrate that there is sufficient retail demand to justify such a large increase in retail floor space in this area.

2.9 Nor has the financial viability of the above scheme been tested. Clearly such significant works as set out in the above drawing LP 49/31C, would be extremely costly, but so far no financial appraisal has been undertaken to demonstrate viability. Mr Bateman in paragraph 13.5 of his evidence states that the Council's Estates Manager indicates a positive land valuation, but puts forward no evidence to support this assertion. Therefore it cannot conclude that such a scheme is financially viable.

2.10 As the relocation of Asda and associated development is a major justification for closing Maurepas Way and diverting the traffic through the MDA, it would be expected that more work would have been undertaken before putting forward the proposals as set out in Drawing LP 49/31/C. As far as can be deduced from evidence submitted to the Inquiry, little work has been undertaken on the feasibility of these proposals beyond preparing the sketch layout.

2.11 David Lock Associates have produced an Urban Design Framework for Waterlooville Town Centre, this puts forward a number of options that have recently been the subject of consultations. None of the Options envisaged the complete closure of Maurepas Way. In addition to the Options developed by David Lock Associates, and as a part of their consultation process Havant put forward the proposal to close Maurepas Way and divert all through traffic currently using that Road through the MDA. The consultation process elicited 80 responses, of which less than half (39) showed a preference for Maurepas Way to be closed and all traffic diverted to the MDA. It is by no means clear whether the consequences for the MDA were fully explained as part of the consideration of options, nor is 39 responses to a significant consultation exercise sufficient justification for such a radical amendment to the proposals for the MDA.

2.12 The City Council does not wish to offer comments on the desirability of the proposals set out in Drawing no LP 49/31 C, as these are within Havant and therefore largely a matter for Havant Borough Council to determine. But the City Council would emphasise that these proposals to extend the town centre are potentially contrary to the advice contained in PPG6 and do not conform to the development plan, and should therefore be thoroughly tested for their acceptability in policy terms and their viability before being put forward for serious consideration. This must also be a prerequisite for putting them forward, as a justification for diverting such significant levels of traffic through the MDA.

- 2.13 However, such considerations are to some extent irrelevant in the context of the Winchester District Local Plan Review; as such proposals even if they were shown to be acceptable go far beyond that which is reasonable to comply with policies aimed at ensuring that the MDA is properly integrated with the MDA. Also, being outside the Winchester Local Plan area, the Local Plan could not make formal proposals for this land.
- 2.14 It is also questionable as to the extent to which the Havant proposals would achieve integration rather than facilitate a retail development. Drawing LP 49/31 C shows the main pedestrian and cycle route from the MDA to the town centre finishing at the curtilage of the proposed Asda superstore, some 400 metres short of the main shopping street. Pedestrians and cyclists would then have to compete with shoppers, as they try and navigate across a superstore forecourt. A cycle path linking to the existing centre is not shown beyond this point. B. Bateman in Appendix 8 of his evidence gives a graphic illustration under the principle 'Connected', as to why it is not desirable to stop a significant pedestrian and cycle route 400 metres short of an important destination, as is being proposed by Havant.
- 2.15 A new town square is proposed, but again it must be questioned as to how this will aid integration. Details of the levels on the north south axis are shown which show a drop of over 10 metres, which will necessitate a series of steps, and will be extremely difficult to negotiate for the elderly, the disabled, mothers with push chairs, shoppers with bags, and cyclists. No details are given as to how the significant differences in levels on the east west axis will be dealt with. As a space the square will be characterised by dead frontages with the superstore car park visually dominating. In an attempt to create some form of activity a number of retail units have been introduced, but there must be questions over their viability, retail unit 1 for example is separated from the rest of the square and located on a platform which in order to access the unit shoppers will have to negotiate a series of steps which either rise or drop by 2m depending on which way the shop is approached. Retail unit 2 has a 2m drop across the middle of the frontage which would bring into question its viability. Taken together the proposals would not assist access to the town centre and would more likely act as a physical barrier to the main shopping street.

3. Issue 2. To what extent are there alternatives to the complete closure of Maurepas Way, and what are the likely consequences in urban design terms?

- 3.1 In this section of the Response Note the City Council will consider the planning and urban design implications of alternatives to closing Maurepas Way, the highways and transport implications will be dealt with separately by Mr G Wright in his evidence. A number of options have previously been considered as alternatives to the complete closure of Maurepas Way. The most obvious way would be to improve pedestrian and cycling crossing facilities through upgrading the existing facilities to a toucan crossing. The David Lock study took this further and proposed that in addition to improved crossing facilities, the width of the carriageway should be reduced.
- 3.2 The option of reducing the carriageway would increase the potential to implement urban design solutions to improve the appearance of Maurepas Way. Furthermore the David Lock study showed that the extension of the town centre was still possible, should this eventually be found to be acceptable.

- 3.3 There is no evidence before this Inquiry to demonstrate that in town planning and urban design terms this approach, which would not have such a devastating affect on the MDA, could not be successfully implemented. Such a solution offers the best opportunity to create the most direct approach between the existing town centre and the MDA.
- 3.4 Alternative options were prepared by consultants acting for Hampshire County Council which included putting the carriageway into a cutting; creating a pedestrian over pass, and an enhanced footbridge. All of these created a direct link between the town centre and the MDA, and offered the scope for some redevelopment, but importantly did not require the re-routing of existing traffic using Maurepas Way through the MDA. It does not appear that these options have been formally considered by Havant Council.
- 3.5 Mr Bateman in paragraph 5.2 of his evidence concludes that the existing Asda superstore is a barrier to the town centre. But given the uncertainties over the feasibility of re-locating the store, which has yet to be properly considered, there would be a danger that Maurepas Way is closed with the consequent impact that this would have on the MDA, but that no development takes place. In any event Mr Bateman's solution simply moves the 'barrier' of Asda from one location to another.
- 3.6 An even worse scenario would be that Asda relocates but the mixed use development proposed on the existing site proves unviable, creating a barrier between the superstore, the MDA and the town centre.
- 3.7 It is the City Council's case therefore, that there remain a number of alternative options, which would need to be considered in more detail, which would achieve the aim of improving access to the town centre and properly integrating it with the MDA . As all of these options are on land outside of the District, the City Council would not wish to offer an opinion as to which of the above options offers the most effective means of integrating with the MDA while at the same time realising Havant's long term aspirations for the Waterlooville town centre, but none of the various options outlined above, would require further amendments to the Winchester District Local Plan Review.

4. Issue 3. What would be the likely impact of re-routing traffic through the MDA on the new community?

4.1 The report of Mott MacDonald reproduced as Appendix B of Mr. Maclean's evidence proposes two options for re-routing traffic from Maurepas Way through the MDA, these are shown as figures 7.2 and 7.3 on pages 37 and 38 of their report. In paragraph 7.2 of this report the estimated traffic flows on the new route through the MDA would be between 3-4,000 vehicles per hour (as opposed to 2-2,200 vehicles per hour currently using Maurepas Way at peak times; paragraph 3.8 A MacLean's evidence).

4.2 The first option proposes a new dual carriageway running east off of the existing roundabout at Maurepas Way, which then travels north south through the MDA skirting both the Local centre and school. The route shown is only diagrammatic, so has to be viewed in conjunction with the Masterplan Framework as set out in Appendix 2 of Topic Paper 6. It can be seen that this route goes through a mixed uses area, where it would be expected that there would be high levels of residential, through wholly residential areas, and open spaces. In addition to blighting these areas and creating environmental problems through increased noise, light and air pollution (which would be acutely felt by the school), it would also cause severance within the MDA. This severance would cut off a significant section of the MDA

from both the proposed facilities within the MDA and from the town centre of Waterlooville. This severance will be exacerbated if and when the 1,000 dwellings held in reserve are triggered for development.

4.3 The second option proposes a slightly shorter length of dual carriageway, which rejoins the A3 further to the north in the vicinity of Mill Road in the Purbrook area of Havant. This solution would cause less disruption to the proposed school, but would be routed through a residential area. It would also cause no less severance, both for residents trying to access facilities within the MDA, and between the MDA and Waterlooville. Accordingly, under both options, large parts of the MDA would be severed from Waterlooville and the aim of integration would not be achieved.

4.4 The present route of Maurepas Way directly affects a number of residential properties in the Forest End area, none of which directly front onto the carriageway. Although at this stage without an adopted layout it is impossible to be precise, the two routes proposed by the Objectors would directly affect significantly more residential properties, whatever the final layout.

4.5 Again it is not possible to calculate the land take for such significant highways works, nor to calculate the full extent of any necessary separation of the highway from the adjoining uses, but with the necessary junctions and crossing points it is likely to be substantial, taking up valuable residential land and open space. This highways land is in addition to the land previously identified to provide necessary infrastructure for the MDA which will still be required to serve the local centre and other facilities. It is likely to result in either higher densities, above the target in Policy NC2 of an average of 40 dwellings per hectare or at worst result in a need for a greater land take to accommodate the required 2,000 dwellings.

4.6 It is recognised by the Objectors in paragraph 3.18 of Mr Maclean's evidence, that there will be severance as a result of diverting traffic to the MDA, (and given that by their own calculations traffic will be significantly higher than currently experienced on Maurepas way, the conclusion must be that the degree of severance will be greater). In mitigation the Objectors put forward two solutions depending on whose evidence the Council is to rely on. Mott MacDonald propose enhanced pedestrian crossings, which Havant have rejected as a solution for Maurepas Way which currently takes less traffic than the Objectors propose for the MDA. While Mr Maclean proposes underpasses in paragraph 3.21 of his evidence, which Mr Bateman has effectively rejected by demonstrating in Appendix 8 of his evidence the barriers and severance caused by such underpasses.

4.7 To deliberately plan in the degree of severance in a new development as proposed by the Objectors goes against all the principles of good planning and design. By Design; Urban Design in the planning system: towards better practice, produced by CABI and published by the DTLR (relevant extracts reproduced as an Appendix to this Response note), emphasises the need for places to be designed to facilitate the ease of movement through it. It makes clear that streets should be designed as public spaces not just in response to engineering considerations. Driving a dual carriageway through the MDA would be in direct contradiction to these principles.

4.8 While it is acknowledged that closing Maurepas Way would bring some benefits to improving access between the MDA and Waterlooville town centre, any benefits would be completely out of proportion to the harm caused to the MDA through severance and environmental degradation.

5. Havant's Proposed Amendments to Policy NC2 in the Local Plan Review.

5.1 The Objectors propose various amendments to Policy NC2 in the Local Plan Review. In respect of Option A as set out in paragraph 14.2 of the Objectors evidence, this proposes that Inset Map 41 is amended to show an indicative alignment of the internal road network. The internal road network is not shown on the Proposals Map at present, and would represent an inappropriate level of detail on the map which is only meant to show the broad areas for development. A more detailed indication of the road network is shown on the Masterplan Framework which is provided for illustrative purposes, but the Objectors do not seek amendments to this diagram.

5.2 In respect of Option B the Inset Map as a matter of principle does not show development outside of the District, so to indicate works in Havant which are not shown in their own Local Plan would be inappropriate.

5.3 As to the proposed amendments to Paragraph RD 12.38 of the Local Plan Review reference to the closure of Maurepas Way would be premature. In PPG12 (**CD 1.9**) paragraph 5.17 makes it clear that only firm transport proposals should be included in a local plan. 'Ideally they should be programmed and finance committed', the proposal to close Maurepas Way is not a firm proposal and therefore should not be included in the Local Plan Review.

5.4 On the same basis it would be inappropriate to follow the Objector's proposed amendments to paragraph RD 12.13 (v) (a) and include reference to traffic calming measures outside of the district for which there are no firm proposals.

5.5 The Inspector is therefore invited to reject the above proposals as inappropriate for inclusion in the Local Plan Review, and confirm the wording of Policy NC2 as set out in the Revised Deposit Plan.