

# Winchester District Local Plan Part 1 – Joint Core Strategy

## Public Examination

### Comments on Modifications 2.32 & 2.36 by Mrs V.E. Bruty (Ref 02750)

#### (1) Modification 2.32

The reason for this modification is "To clarify **how** the policy will be implemented". The modification is that additional paragraphs should be added before paragraph 6.25 to read -  
*"Implementation of this policy will be through the development management process .....  
Details of transport related schemes are set out in a number of transport related plans and strategies  
such as the Council's Cycling Strategy and Hampshire Sustainable Transport Towns Project ....."*

#### **Hampshire Sustainable Transport Towns LSTF Project Update on Project Delivery #1 - November 2011**

The objectives of the Project are –

- Fewer car trips per household or employee will **reduce congestion** at peak times on local roads, indirectly helping to support job creation and town centre vitality;
- To **reduce carbon** and greenhouse gas emissions, helping improve air quality and address the contribution of local transport to climate change;
- To **encourage** people of all ages to adopt healthier, more active lifestyles.

**How** are people are going to be encouraged to cycle and walk from Barton Farm, instead of using their cars, in large enough numbers to reduce congestion and pollution? The only way people would cycle is if there were proper cycle networks but that is not possible in a city like Winchester. Congestion and pollution levels are higher today than ever before because of the increased population in the city and driving a car will always be first choice for getting from A to B; second choice will be taking a bus.

At the recent Examination the Director of Cala Homes informed the Inspector that the developers would be providing a footpath/cycle path across the estate to Abbots Barton to enable Barton Farm residents to get into the city centre; there would be substantial money provided (£40,000) and the County Council were coming up with implementation policies. This will do little to encourage people to cycle because it would almost double the length of the journey for most residents of the Barton Farm development. I live closer to the city centre, I enjoy cycling, have the confidence and it gives me independence but it has been obvious to me for years that few other people think the same. Whenever I am on my bicycle, no matter what time of day, I only occasionally see one or two other cyclists but more often than not, no others, and this is what makes me think this part of the plan is untenable. I know quite large numbers of people cycle to the railway station early in the morning and leave their bikes, but their cars are still available at home for use during the day.

#### (2) Modification 2.36

amends policy to read: *"New development will be expected to meet the highest standards of design. In order to achieve this all proposals for new development should demonstrate that the public realm has been designed to ensure that it is attractive, safe, acceptable and well connected to its surroundings, including walking and cycling routes to and within the development, to encourage their use".*

I do not consider it possible to ensure that the new development is connected to its surroundings, including walking and cycling routes to and from the development to encourage their use. My reasons are as follows:

The plan places heavy reliance on residents at the development not using private vehicular transport in order to justify the claim for sustainability and I am of the firm opinion that the provision of cycling facilities as proposed by Cala Homes falls far short of what would be required to make cycling a viable proposition. Few people living currently at Weeke and Harestock estates (which border Barton Farm) cycle into the city and there is no reason to suppose that the mitigating measures proposed are likely to make negotiating Andover Road south of Park Road by bicycle any more attractive. Previous Inspectors at Public Inquiries have not taken this sufficiently into account.

### **Andover Road**

Designated footpaths for pedestrians or cycle ways to use once off Barton Farm are not practicable from the junction with Park Road into Winchester because that section of Andover Road is too narrow. Making part of old Andover Road a cycle/pedestrian path would serve little purpose because it cannot join up with another designated path. Cyclists (in numbers) would join up with traffic at the south end of the development and would have to share Andover Road with heavy traffic, including buses, to and from the development. Cyclists would hold up traffic on the steep part of the road. The opportunity to widen the railway bridge on Andover Road to accommodate cyclists as was originally proposed by Cala Homes was irrevocably lost when Network Rail rebuilt the bridge in 2011. The City Road/Andover Road junction is currently at capacity, large numbers of cyclists would cause even longer hold-ups for traffic there. There has been considerably more housing development along Andover Road since the first planning application.

### **Park Road**

Park Road is not safe or convenient for cyclists (in numbers) because of the narrow bridge over the railway and the amount of traffic in both directions. The bridge is on a bend in the road and it is not easy for the driver of a car to see what is coming from the opposite direction; cars quite often have to reverse because there is no room to pass another vehicle. The Worthy Road end of Park Road has a steep gradient, particularly treacherous in icy conditions. Since Cala Homes first made planning application there has been considerably more development along Park Road. There is likely to be a new development on the corner of Park Road where it joins Andover Road.

### **Worthy Road**

The proposed cycle path from the development will join up with Worthy Road at Abbots Barton and Cala Homes consider it to be the best route to encourage people to use for this alternative mode of transport. The path is already there on Barton Farm for use as a public footpath but problems could arise in the future when large numbers of cyclists are using it and have to go under the railway bridge on the development to reach the proposed foot/cycle path behind Colley Close. The path on the Barton Farm side rises steeply up to the bridge and that could be a deterrent to cyclists; because the gap is narrow, cyclists and pedestrians in large numbers could be held up on either side having to wait for those coming up the hill or coming down.

During the time Cala Homes have been waiting for planning permission, there has been considerable development at Kings Worthy and Springvale and more people are coming into Winchester from that direction by car and bus and the designated path from Barton Farm ending at Worthy Road would come out at a very busy junction making it difficult to cross the road. New cycle paths on the Worthy Road and through Abbots Barton if provided through HSTT Project would already be in use by people living on new developments being built today where the need for them to use alternative transport is just as important. An influx of cyclists from Barton Farm would cause congestion. The journey back from town is mostly uphill all the way to the edge of Barton Farm.

### **Riverside Park**

Conditions for cyclists are far from ideal at the present time; the path is not wide enough for large numbers of cyclists and pedestrians, especially in fine weather. This, of course, may well be something that will be improved in the future. Young children are being encouraged by their parents to learn to ride cycles in safety in the park. How safe will the roads be for them to use when they are older?

### **Park Avenue/North Walls**

Large numbers of cyclists crossing at the traffic lights would need more time and this would cause another hold-up for traffic. Today, there is just enough time for one or two cyclists and pedestrians to cross before the lights change.

**Well House Lane**

Its triangular shape makes Barton Farm an island with only two ways off, onto Andover Road and Well House Lane. The railway line cuts traffic off from Worthy Road; Park Road and makes Well House Lane, which is one-way at the rail bridge, the logical route to the M3, for which it is clearly unsuitable.

**Chilbolton Avenue**

This is one of the main routes into or out of Winchester to the east and an alternative to Romsey Road for cyclists. In the last decade it has changed from being a quiet road with large private houses standing well back, to a new suburb of Winchester with rows of town houses, increasing not only the population but also the number of cars on the road. Building has not stopped, there are still large pieces of land designated for many more houses to be built in the near future. Peak time traffic is held up at each end by traffic lights and roundabouts making it difficult for cyclists.

The number of cyclists killed on roads in Britain so far this year has overtaken the figure for 2011, with cyclists dying at a rate of more than two a week. If fatal accidents continue at the present rate, the annual figure will be the highest since 2007. (Source: The Sunday Times 25/11/12).

How will it be possible to make cycling a safe alternative to using cars when cyclists are forced to share busy roads with HGVs, cars and buses because there is no room for cycle paths on any of the main roads in Winchester?

**Vera Bruty****27 November 2012****Ref 02750**