

**LDP EXAMINATION: BASINGSTOKE & DEANE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**



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Planning. Design. Economics.

**WRITTEN HEARING STATEMENT ON
ISSUE 9: TRANSPORT**

On behalf of Festival Place Unit Trust

25 September 2015

This Written Hearing Statement has been prepared by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners (NLP), on behalf of Festival Place Unit Trust (FPUT), to respond to the Inspector's Issue 9 (transport) Question 19.4, further to earlier FPUT representations on the emerging Local Plan, including Policy EP3 – Town, District and Local Centres.

Q 19.4 - Are parking and access issues in the town centre properly addressed in the Plan?

The Local Plan does address town centre car parking and access issues to a limited extent, but ought to go further on how it envisages these being enhanced as part of enhancing the centre's vitality, consistent with the NPPF (40) and PPG guidance on town centre strategies (ID 2b-002).

LP Policy EP3 (Town, District and Local Centres) states that development in Basingstoke town centre *"will be expected to create a more accessible, well-connected and well-designed centre"*. However, LP Policies EP3 and CN9 (Transport) do not make specific reference to parking and access issues in the town centre or how parking may be improved during the course of the Local Plan (to 2029).

The supporting text to LP Policy CN9 (5.81) refers to the objectives and priorities set out in the B&DBC Transport Statement (2013) and supporting Hampshire Local Transport Plan (2013) and Basingstoke Town Access Plan (2011) documents.

The B&DBC Transport Statement identifies that the main transport challenges facing the borough include *"improving transport accessibility, particularly to the town centres"* (p10). The Hampshire Local Transport Plan recognises that the NPPF (40) identifies that local authorities should *"seek to improve the quality of parking in town centres so that it is convenient, safe and secure"* (p39).

For Basingstoke, the Local Transport Plan explains that HCC will work with B&DBC to develop and agree approaches to parking for the town centre (p52). The Basingstoke Town Access Plan provides further details on how car parks within Basingstoke town centre will be maintained and, where appropriated, enhanced (p27).

Festival Place provides the majority of car parking within Basingstoke town centre (see B&DBC website - www.basingstoke.gov.uk/carparks#elem_22895). Car parking at Festival Place supports the vitality and viability of Basingstoke town centre by providing conveniently located short and long stay car parking facilities in the heart of the town centre. This supports the attractiveness of the town centre for residents, workers and those living outside the borough by making the town centre easily accessible for retail, culture and leisure purposes (in line with LP Objective D). Maintaining and improving the Festival Place car parks over time is therefore necessary to assist the health of the town centre.

For example, Festival Place Car Park 1 (the former NCP Car Park) will require major refurbishment or redevelopment. It is located between the B&DBC controlled Alencon Link car park and Festival Place car parks and provides the vertical up circulation for the northern end of the Festival Place car park. It was originally constructed in circa c.1968 and is nearing the end of its lifespan.

FPUT consider that, whilst the delivery of car parking and access improvements in the town centre is important, it can be guided through the Basingstoke Town Access Plan and its implementation. Local Plan Policies CN9 and EMP3 should, however, specifically identify that the Council will seek to improve town centre accessibility and the quality and (if necessary) the quantity of car, cycle and other vehicular parking within Basingstoke town centre to maximise its competitiveness.

Policies CN9 and EP3 should encourage specific improvements in Basingstoke town centre, including through refurbishment or redevelopment of car parks at Festival Place and other town centre car parks. We suggest the following changes:

CN9 – Transport

Add new paragraph after development criteria

“Within Basingstoke town centre, development proposals affecting existing parking provision will be encouraged and supported where they improve existing parking facilities or access.”

EP3 – Town, District and Local Centres

Add new sentence after last paragraph of Policy EP3:

“Proposals for improvements to town centre parking and access will be encouraged where they improve existing parking facilities or access.”