

To the Planning Inspector.

Re: Examination into the Basingstoke & Deane Local Plan 2026 (the Local Plan)

Policy SS-11 - Whitchurch Station Car Park

Dear Sir,

Please find attached the following:-

- 1) Seventeen photographs of the site.
- 2) CPRE Response to Zurich's screening request.
- 3) Document confirming SW view of lack of business case for a station car park.
- 4) N.P survey of Whitchurch Station car parks (September 2014).
- 5) Map of where the photographs were taken.
- 6) B&DBC Insert map No 9 – Whitchurch Town.
- 7) Gosling-846291-994-SS11-2.pdf
- 8) Pro Vision planning application letter 15/02912/OUT - dated 14th August 2015.
- 9) St Cross Site - Planning Application 15-02912/OUT.
- 10) Zurich EIA Plan North of Railway.

My Request.

I would like to request that the proposed car park within the AONB be deleted from the 2026 Local Plan.

Points for Consideration.

In August 2013, I detailed the points in my paper 'Basingstoke and Deane Pre-Submission Local Plan 2011-2029 - Draft for Public Consultation' and these points are still valid. However, since then, there have been several significant developments which I would like you to take into consideration.

Although, the scope of your Local Plan examination can only cover the aspect of the station car park in the AONB, I would like you to consider the wider implications, now that Zurich have linked the car park in the emerging 2026 Local Plan to a large Business Park development within the AONB, which is not in the Local Plan (planning application 15/02676/ENSC).

I have listed some additional points for your consideration:-

1. SW Trains have gone on record (see document number 3) stating that they “can not make the business case for the car park ‘stand up’”. The proposal for a car park has been included in Local Plans for a long time with no action, including no planning application.
2. The Zurich station car park can seemingly only be funded by Zurich building a large Business Park in the AONB. This strategic scale proposal is contrary to the existing and emerging Local Plan and national policies relating to the AONB as set out in paragraphs 115 and 116 of the NPPF.
3. Zurich wants to provide a station car park for 150 cars, but a one hectare site has been allocated, which could comfortably support 400 cars.
4. The proposed Zurich station car park, will be north of the railway and within the AONB. It is being strongly opposed by the North Wessex Downs AONB, CPRE and members of the public.
5. St Cross has offered to build a station car park in their September 2015 planning application (15/02912/OUT). This is within the settlement boundary, near to the station and near to the Whitchurch community.
6. The St Cross site and access road via the tunnel and employment site (D3.21) is being removed from any development in the emerging 2026 local plan. This was not instigated at the request of Pro Vision or St Cross. In addition, B&DBC are proposing to change the settlement boundary in the emerging Local Plan 2026, to exclude the St Cross land. B&DBC feels the need for the station car park in the AONB to remain, so B&DBC have reinstated this element in the 2026 emerging Local Plan.
7. The car park on the former ‘Station Hotel’ has a temporary permission. The St Cross station car park is larger than the 48 space temporary car park on the ‘Station Hotel’. A survey carried out in 2014 by the Whitchurch N.P confirmed that 48 spaces was sufficient size for current needs, so the proposed car park can be planned to allow for growth.
8. In September 2015, a mixed use scheme has been submitted by Pro Vision on behalf of St Cross (Planning Application 15/02912/OUT). This application is for development of the St Cross site which is within the settlement boundary. The planning application will provide a station car park and 4,200 sq metres of B1 & B2 space plus 70 houses. This site is identified as being within the settlement boundary and identified for development in the existing Local Plan, has a ‘minded to grant’ permission for employment development and consequently meets the test in paragraph 116 of the NPPF regarding avoiding unnecessary development in the AONB.
9. In 2014 a detailed industrial survey carried out by the Whitchurch Neighbourhood Plan (N.P), confirmed that approximately 4,000 sq metres was the maximum industrial space that was needed for existing businesses in the town to expand over the next 15 years. At the time of the public consultation process in 2014, the Whitchurch Neighbourhood Plan (N.P) supported the St Cross mixed use scheme. It also received strong public support and

was voted as a preferred development site. To my knowledge the N.P will not propose the development of the Zurich site for employment.

10. There is a perceived lack of need for additional strategic scale employment within the B&DBC Borough.
11. In August 2015 Zurich submitted Application 15/02676/ENSC for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion for new business park and station car park. The proposed Business Park within the AONB will provide 13,000 sq metres of B1, B2 and B8 industrial buildings. This is three times more than the Whitchurch N.P requirements. The total site area is approximately 9 hectares and is located outside of the settlement boundary and within the North Wessex Downs AONB. The proposed site has no strong natural boundaries and is therefore likely to expand.
12. The AONB Management Plan (2014 – 2019) has been adopted by the Council and the AONB authority and its Management Plan are material considerations in planning decisions. The Zurich Business Park and Car Park are contrary to this Management Plan.
13. The National Planning Policy Framework states (paragraph 109) that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. The AONB is a ‘sensitive area’ clearly an important, material, issue and NPPF is clear (paragraph 115) that great weight must be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. The proposed car park will not support this, as it is in an exposed position and will be seen for miles.

David Gosling
23rd September 2015