



**EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC OF  
THE BASINGSTOKE & DEANE LOCAL PLAN**

---

**FURTHER SUBMISSION  
ON BEHALF OF  
THE BASINGSTOKE  
SOUTH-WEST ACTION GROUP (SWAG)**

---

**Hearing Session(s): Issue 9 – Transport**

**Hearing Dates: 5 November 2015**

**Addressing: Inspector's Questions 19.1.3 Is the proposed improvement of the Fiveways junction at Kempshott justified; will the increased capacity cater for likely traffic flows up to 2029; and how user-friendly will it be for both pedestrians and cyclists? Links with MF23 work requested by Inspector at Manydown session on 20 October**

**EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC OF  
THE BASINGSTOKE & DEANE LOCAL PLAN**

**FURTHER SUBMISSION OF MICHAEL HENRY BSc CEng MICE  
ON BEHALF OF  
THE BASINGSTOKE SOUTH-WEST ACTION GROUP (SWAG)**

**Covering objections to Transport Assessment and Sustainability of proposed allocation at  
Area 6A Manydown Policy SS3.10 Clause 'u'.**

**Introduction**

- 1.1 I have prepared this evidence on behalf of SWAG in response to the recent submissions to the EIP of two documents relating to traffic assessments of the signal controlled junction known as 'Fiveways Junction' between Pack Lane, Buckskin Lane and Kempshott Lane.
- 1.2 In doing so I have had particular regard to
- i) A Briefing Note entitled 'Fiveways Assessment' dated September 2015 but completed 15th October 2015 by consultants AECOM on behalf of the promoters of the Manydown site.
  - ii) A Technical Note authored by Mr. S Jenkins for the local highway authority (HCC) dated 16 October 2015 which considered the AECOM work and then concluded that it was *"satisfied at this stage of the planning process that a viable highway solution can be developed for this junction as part of further technical work and on going master planning and delivered by the development as part of a mitigation package at the Development Management stage. In the context of the Local Plan process the LHA hereby confirms that its specific objection to Policy SS3.10 clause 'u' is withdrawn."*
  - iii) The current (ninth issue) Transport Assessment (TA) prepared by Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB) for the Local Plan, together with a supporting position statement prepared by HCC and PB dated 22 April 2015
  - iv) Appendix 14 of the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) prepared by the Council.
  - v) The consolidated (October 2015) version of the Local Plan
  - vi) The Draft Cycling Strategy Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council Sept 2015

- vii) I have also prepared this evidence in the light of the oral evidence given to the EIP by Mr Jenkins on Tuesday 20th October. The salient points he made, which I will refer to later in this evidence were:
- That the AECOM proposed junction improvement deal only with additional traffic flows up to the year 2021. HCC/AECOM would therefore prepare a further paper (by 30 October) addressing the post 2021 situation.
  - Traffic movements at the junction will need to be resurveyed after the works at Black Dam have been completed and traffic flows have settled down.
  - The proposed junction improvement shown on drawing 'FIVE-ACH-AH-00-SK-CE-00002 Revision P01 will need to be worked up following a more detailed topographical survey and that realigned footways, access arrangements to the adjoining properties and the highway boundary will be shown on a revised drawing yet to be submitted to the EIP. This work is needed to demonstrate the deliverability of the junction proposals approved in outline by HCC.

## Summary Conclusions

- 1.3 The operational capacity of the Fiveways Junction to cope with future traffic is clearly crucial to the assessment of whether Area 6A is suitable for the development of 300 houses. By AECOM's own assessment (Annex E1) at least 85% of the traffic generated by that site would pass through the junction to destinations in Basingstoke and elsewhere.
- 1.4 In my view, the essence of the AECOM/HCC case is that on the basis of latest traffic data the operation of the existing junction would deteriorate by 2021 and that this deterioration would be comparable to conditions if development were permitted on Area 6A in association with its proposed Fiveways improvements.
- 1.5 The conclusion I have reached in the short amount of time available to examine the matter is that the assessment by AECOM is not as robust as claimed. The problem of identifying deliverable improvements to allow this junction to cope with future demands remains as identified in the TA for the Local Plan, and in my view AECOM's work is certainly not sufficient on the basis of current data to merit the endorsement now given to it by HCC.
- 1.6 Notwithstanding that concern, particularly about the data used to arrive at it, I consider the AECOM proposals to downgrade or remove altogether cycling provision at the junction to be radically at odds with other Local Plan policies as well as the Council's recently published Draft Cycling Strategy to encourage and promote environmentally friendly travel modes as reasonable and safe alternatives to car travel.

- 1.7 For these reasons I agree therefore with the SWAG position that that the draft allocation for development on Area 6A should still be judged against severe access constraints and the damaging affects on non car modes of travel across the Fiveways junction.

## Traffic Data

- 1.8 I accept at face value the recent AECOM survey of present day peak-hour vehicle traffic movements at Fiveways junction. These are summarised in TABLE 1 column 1 of the AECOM report. I have however reservations about the appropriateness of the cycle movement surveys conducted at the same time, which I explain in paragraph 1.28.
- 1.9 In relation to the vehicle data, I am puzzled by what I regard to be a misleading comparison made in TABLE 1 with data in BDBC's Transport Assessment prepared for the Council by Parsons Brinckerhoff (PB). So far as I have been able to find the PB assessment does not provide comparable (2015) data, only reference case data and LP scenario case data both for various future years which both include for permitted development and for background growth. What is more, I cannot find the figures purportedly from the BDBC TA quoted by AECOM in column 2 of TABLE 1 as "synthesised observed" flows for traffic movements at Fiveways junction. The present BDBC TA (see page 106 tables 4.63 and 64) looked at only two cases; firstly the 2029 reference case and then the 2029 LP scenario. I am not therefore surprised that, however they have been worked out, flows in Basingstoke in 2029 are predicted to be notably higher than those observed today. I would welcome clarification on this because it runs to the heart of the AECOM/HCC view that BDBC has previously grossly overestimated traffic at this junction. Looking at the current data and PB's 2029 figures I do not think that to be the case.
- 1.10 The AECOM report says (pages 6-7) that for its 2021 assessments current traffic movements have been factored up allowing for forecast background traffic growth derived from TEMPRO with generated traffic from area 6A added in as appropriate. I have several difficulties in accepting that approach.
- 1.11 Firstly, no where in the AECOM report can I find these 2021 data tabulated for ready checking and assessment. I have the modelled (LINSIG) outputs from applying those data but not the data themselves. Presumably Mr Jenkins for HCC will have been similarly unable to check these or will have been shown them privately before writing his report approving them on behalf of the highway authority. A further confusion arises in the AECOM report from the fact that although the LINSIG output sheets are entitled as 2021 assessments and the main text refers to 2021 as the design year, Annex A1 to that report, which details the

agreed actions in August 2015 between HCC PB and AECOM, specifically refers (Action 2) to testing future year scenarios only in 2017, not 2021. The reference to 2017 cannot be an isolated typographical error because it is repeated frequently throughout the action note forming Annex1.

- 1.12 Secondly, and most importantly, the assignment of generated traffic from Area 6A has been calculated on the assumption that 11% of that traffic will “leak” to and from the site via Dorset Avenue on the existing residential development to the north of the site. In doing so that traffic will avoid the necessity to pass through Fiveways Junction.
- 1.13 I have been unable to find an explanation in the AECOM work of this entirely new aspect of the access master planning for Area 6A, which I think is inconsistent with all previous assumptions in the LP and specifically is clearly at odds with the draft inset Map for policy SS3.10 which shows footway cycle links into this existing estate but not vehicular connection.
- 1.14 I find it surprising that HCC have made no mention of this assumption, which on the available evidence suggests an arbitrary reassignment of traffic away from Fiveways with no previous planning assessment by the Council in its LP evidence base into the consequences of doing so.
- 1.15 The Position statement prepared jointly between PB and HCC in April 2015 provides a detailed explanation of HCC’s view of the trip rates and traffic modelling work applied in the PB assessments for the LP. It is not appropriate in this evidence to discuss those conclusions but put simply HCC view may be summarised as accepting that the overestimations of the future traffic modelling technique used were offset to a degree by the lower than usual trip rates PB applied, and that in any event notwithstanding some specific concerns of HCC over elements of the methodology, it accepted that the TA was fit for purpose as a strategic assessment of the traffic impacts of the proposed Local Plan development.
- 1.16 It is somewhat surprising to find the particularly low residential trip rates used by PB reapplied by AECOM in its recent higher level assessment work for Area 6A. AECOM’s trip rates are for example notably lower than those agreed by HCC for the approved developments at Kennel Farm and Razors Farm, which I would thought entirely comparable developments to that at Area 6A.
- 1.17 I would not normally expect an LP EIP to be concerned with such matters but it is pertinent in this case because it demonstrates a consistent theme of AECOM in effect stretching

every possible parameter to reduce the traffic numbers Area 6A will generate through Fiveways junction.

- 1.18 Finally on the matter of traffic data I await the comments by AECOM/HCC into the post 2021 scenarios for Fiveways. By that date, my interpolation of the LP time table is that less than one third of the total of 5,460 houses proposed at the Manydown and the South West Basingstoke sites (including all of the 300 at Pack Lane) are forecast to be completed by 2021. That leaves 3,900 houses to be completed on those sites between 2021 and 2029, which must have a further impact on the effective operation of Fiveways.
- 1.19 An obvious concern, as the data are projected forward to 2029, is that that virtually all traffic emanating from Manydown and heading towards the retail parks along the A30 (e.g. Sainsburys, Argos), the proposed critical treatment hospital and the M3 Junction 7 will have to travel east along the Worting Road (B3400), right onto Buckskin Lane and on through the Fiveways junction. I don't think that junction can be avoided without adding many more miles to the journey or using the narrow and unsuitable Trenchards Lane.
- 1.20 Whilst I appreciate that the main and most easily quantifiable amount of traffic increase at the junction will arise from the 300 houses at South Manydown, I am not persuaded at present that the BDBC TA Local Plan 2029 scenario deals fully with the likely additional demand that development in the western and south western would have at Fiveways.
- 1.21 I think PB and HCC both recognise the limitations of the current TA in this respect. The closing paragraph of their April position statement betrays this concern by stating *"Further transport impact studies will be undertaken as part of the DCLG funding for South West Basingstoke, which will refine the TA findings in this part of the Borough."*

### **Fiveways Junction Proposed Layout**

- 1.22 I can accept the present position in this LP that in many cases refinement to required junction improvements will in all probability be accommodated within the highway land available. I also accept it is not normally appropriate in an EIP to be overly concerned as to what the details of those works might be.
- 1.23 Those refinements will usually be part of the normal design process as proposals progress through their planning procedures. The busy and tightly constrained Fiveways junction is however rather different, and quite what *"refining the TA findings in this part of the Borough"* means in relation to Fiveways is in my view an open question that has been too lightly dismissed by both the Council and the local highway authority.

- 1.24 Clearly the road proposals shown by AECOM on drawing 'FIVE-ACH-AH-00-SK-CE-00002 Revision PO1' stretch carriageway improvements to the limits and require 2 metre wide footways to be set back to the very edge of the putative highway limits that surround this junction. These widening have been shown without regard to level differences and without regard to existing private accesses close to the present junction. The approved plan does not even show the proposed back edges of the realigned footways, all of which leaves me puzzled as how with such a sketchy plan before it HCC could have been so confident in concluding it to be a proper and deliverable solution to the capacity demands of this junction.
- 1.25 At the very least I would suggest that a more reasonable approach by HCC would have been to have deferred any decision about the AECOM proposal until a more detailed scheme had been submitted and scrutinised to establish its practicability. I await sight of that promised plan with interest.
- 1.26 Even on the available evidence I have serious reservations about a further aspect of the AECOM proposals namely to downgrade or remove altogether the existing cycling provisions at the junction, a matter which I turn to in the next section of this evidence.

### **Cycling and Sustainability**

- 1.27 The AECOM proposals remove all existing advanced stop lines (ASLs) and cycle stages at the Fiveways junction avowedly to improve traffic capacity as much as possible. The justification for this action is taken from a single day's peak hour survey of cycle movements at the junction.
- 1.28 By my understanding AECOM has not carried out off peak or weekend surveys of cycle movements across the junction. It is also pertinent to point out that AECOM conducted its survey on the first day of term for 2<sup>nd</sup> year students (second day for 1<sup>st</sup> year) of the local sixth form college, Queen Mary College, and three days before the start of term for the Basingstoke College of Technology. I do not know, but neither apparently does AECOM or HCC know, what difference a more comprehensive cycle survey would show if it were conducted at a time when travel patterns to the local school and colleges had settled down.
- 1.29 Given that older school and college students are a target demographic group for cycling provision I think it unsound, as AECOM has done, to place weight on its single day peak hour cycle survey on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015.

- 1.30 Clearly as a matter of general principle there is a balance to be struck between the needs for vehicle traffic capacity and the needs to allow cyclists to cross signal junctions safely. But self evidently downgrading or removing facilities for cyclists flies against a raft of BDBC and HCC policies that seek to improve and encourage cycling. The desirability to promote and encourage non vehicular modes of travel throughout Basingstoke is a recurring theme of the LP and its policies, specifically LP Policy CN9, and these strands are drawn together in the Cycling Strategy Document for Basingstoke recently approved as a consultation draft by BDBC.
- 1.31 No where in any of the analysis by AECOM or in the approval issued by HCC for the Fiveways junction have I seen a considered transparent appraisal of the potentially adverse impact that the proposed changes might have on cycling across the junction. Nor have I seen any comment by the Council itself on how the changes are reconciled with its Cycling Strategy for the Borough which identifies Pack Lane (East) as part of the existing strategic cycle network as well as showing the present Fiveway junction as a barrier to safe cycling (see map page 13).
- 1.32 Fiveways junction despite the survey by AECOM is not an isolated or remote location for cyclists, but is at the confluence of a number of existing cycle routes, which the Council's Cycling Strategy is keen to promote. (see Strategic Cycle Map for Basingstoke page 22) The Council's LP Inset Map shows an east-west pedestrian and cycle corridor across the junction, and if Area 6A is to be developed I suggest that 300 houses may generate significant additional pedestrian/cycle movements to the shop/ post office in Pack Lane East, the large village hall to the rear and the adjoining Stratton Park sports pitches.
- 1.33 Cycle use of the junction is likely to increase because of increased cycle use of the north-south multi-user path to the west of Kempshott (arising from the South West Basingstoke sites) and the short section of already widened cycle and footway connecting to Fiveways on the south side of Pack Lane West.
- 1.34 For these reasons I have not been persuaded that either AECOM or HCC have paid sufficient regard to the future needs of cyclists at Fiveways junction. Furthermore I have seen no evidence that suggests that BDBC has given enough attention to whether the diminution in cycling provision proposed at the Fiveways junction is consistent with its LP policies to promote cycling and walking as a reasonable alternative to car travel.