

From: Cllr Martin Biermann

Sent: 10 December 2014 21:40

To: Katharine Makant

Cc: David Thornton; Assistantclerkchineham; Cllr Chris Tomblin; Adam Dodgshon; Joanne Brombley

Subject: Examination of the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan 2011 – 2029:

Dear Mrs Makant,

Firstly, I must apologise for having failed to follow your guidance about submitting a statement on the topics I wished to address at tomorrow's hearing. I fully understand my absence from the list of speakers selected.

I nonetheless felt it would be relevant to drop you a line covering the specific issues I would have wished to raise, so that you have those thoughts on file.

My particular concern was Mr Fox's observation [that](#):

“Where is the evidence that aspirational policies, such as SS10 for a new railway station at Chineham, are deliverable within the plan period, or are they unsound in that they sterilise land? Are these policies on the ‘right’ side of paragraph 154 of the Framework?”

The station project has indeed been in being for a very long time. It has benefited/suffered from a host of central government transport initiatives which have sometimes introduced it as a desirable/essential piece of infrastructure and at other times deemed it to be impractical.

I submit that the following considerations suggest that it should most definitely remain as a planned piece of vital infrastructure:

- The A33 is seriously over-burdened and a Chineham station would help to offer relief.
- Both residents and employers have moved to the Chineham area with an expectation of the station provision in due course.
- In the past a significant barrier for Network Rail has been timetabling accommodation for an extra stop between Basingstoke [and](#) Reading. Recent signalling upgrades together with planned electrification of the route will provide for greater efficiency, especially in terms of acceleration, and thus largely overcome this difficulty.
- The landtake for the proposed station is minimal. A small booking office would be the only structure. Platforms would be largely taken out of the existing cutting. Some woodland would be felled and overflow parking is destined for nearby woodland, which would be largely retained. I thus contend that any land “sterilisation” is negligible.

I would also have suggested that the proposed housing numbers [are](#) unrealistic, given the planned economic growth much trumpeted for our borough.

Lastly, I consider the “Strategic Gap” policy unrealistic, given housing expansion likely to materialise. The ability to substantially “protect” communities/settlements can be achieved by infrastructural mechanisms without dedicating great swathes of land thereto and creating a series of doughnuts around the principal urban areas.

I do hope that these concerns can be given consideration by Mr Fox, at some early stage in the process.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Biermann.

(Chineham Ward Councillor)