

Handed in at EM
PS/03/29

I am here to argue that the West of Basingstoke, including Manydown, should be planned strategically and such thinking included in the local plan.

The two Councils are promoting Manydown for development. I do not argue with that. I point out however, that they are promoting the whole of Manydown for development. Not 'Manydown north of the railway line, plus a bit to the south' but all of it. Not 3,400 homes but potentially 8,000.

In addition there are landowners promoting other fields to the West of Basingstoke, proposed developments at the golf club and Kennel Farm and a new hospital being planned near M3 Junction 7. We could see approaching 10,000 homes and important facilities built to the West of Basingstoke.

But no-one knows yet where the strategic infrastructure will run, because the West of Basingstoke has not been planned strategically and in its totality.

The local plan is indistinct on whether a western by-pass will be needed or whether another crossing of the railway line will be needed and if so where the money comes from and whether Network Rail will allow it. No-one knows where the southern exit of a road towards M3 Junction 7 will emerge.

The local plan as currently written is indistinct. In policy SS3.10 para m it talks of a link road and the possible 'optimum location for this road to cross the railway line'. In para n it talks about a potential requirement for a western by-pass linking the A339 to Junction 7 of the M3 and its optimum point to cross the railway line.

I doubt very much whether any public budget could stretch to two crossings, but we have two potentials mentioned in the draft plan. For the local plan to fulfil its purpose, those potentials should have been turned into strategic proposals.

Worse still the draft plan talks of the western by-pass being determined through the Manydown Master planning process. This is flawed. Any such road would have to pass over more land than just Manydown. It cannot be delegated to a 'junior' document. It has to be resolved in the 'senior' document, the Local Plan and the public given the opportunity to test that as part of the overall planning process.

By every reasonable test, a western by-pass and a crossing of the railway are strategic decisions. By delegating such strategic decisions to the Manydown Master Plan, the local plan as currently drafted becomes non-compliant with the NPPF which tasks the local plan with setting out the strategic priorities for transport.

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