

Mike Burgess

From: Simon Barber <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 13 October 2017 12:07
To: Planning Policy
Subject: Re: Northampton Local Plan (Part 2) Sites Consultation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Rob Thornhill,

As you may already be aware, I am a member of the English Regional Transport Association (ERTA), which is a voluntary membership-based, pro-public transport improvement association with its main projects in the Bedfordshire and surrounding regional areas. Several of its projects have a nation-wide positive benefit and impact. As a member of this organisation, I have a few concerns in regard to the Northampton Local Plan.

First, the site **Land north of Martin's Yard, Spencer Bridge (Ref. no. LAA 1005)** - Since this is close to the main railway line, there should not be any housing nor office development on that site. Moreover, this could obliterate the old track-bed of the old Northampton - Bedford railway (see later). In any case, the housing and offices will encourage more road traffic, and the town's roads are frequently congested.

Second, **St. James Inner Relief Road** - This is a short-term project and will shift traffic rather than removing it and at best, given there is a considerable amount of commercial and domestic development in Northampton Borough, the new road space will soon fill up with traffic. It will also obliterate the old track-bed of the old Northampton - Bedford railway.

Third, **Northampton Northern Relief Road** - This will also shift traffic rather than removing it and again, the new road space will soon fill up with traffic. Furthermore, it will also obliterate the track-bed of the old Northampton-Market Harborough railway line which ERTA also wishes to see re-opened.

The town's chronic traffic congestion in the urban and bypass corridors indeed delays deliveries to places like the Brackmills Industrial estate, which is erosive as it increases operational costs and adds time delay potential. The town also already has two bypasses/inner relief roads, and the building of these roads mentioned above will not meet the challenges of climate change and flooding, which has already at least once recently affected the town, nor will these roads enhance the town's historic and natural environment.

As I had mentioned earlier, ERTA wishes to see old railway trackbeds protected, and in particular the Northampton - Bedford railway which ERTA welcomes support for reopening and consideration to fund a study in conjunction with other parties. Reopening that rail link will bring substantial benefits for both passengers and freight. In fact, ERTA raised funds for commissioning a £1500 Pre-feasibility Study (Engineering Study) by the Scott Handley Partnership back in 2001 and a £1500 Merits Case Pre-feasibility Outline looking at the case. This was generously supported by the Councils and the public at large. The study provided a route option around interim development threats, largely accepted at a subsequent inquiry at Olney over Warrington Road and a new Road with offices. The benefits for Northampton will be as follows:

- Improved connections to Bedford and Olney
- Cream off excess traffic along M1/A45/A14/A428, particularly in peak-hours

- More parking spaces at Northampton Station
- Boost range/business cases for all routes associated with East-West Consortium

Furthermore, there must be new stations/halts at Watermills (new University campus) and at Brackmills (industrial estate); the old Bridge Street station should also be re-opened.

Yours faithfully,

Simon Barber

On 09/10/2017 14:30, Planning Policy wrote:

I wrote to you on the 27 September 2017, informing you that the Council is undertaking a Sites Consultation as part of the preparation of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2.

Appendix A of the consultation is a list of sites to be considered for further investigation in preparing the Local Plan Part 2. We have since identified that some sites which should be in Appendix A have been omitted.

We have therefore published an Addendum to Appendix A: Sites to be considered for further investigation, which contains these additional sites. The Addendum should be read in conjunction with the sites consultation documents, including Appendix A, and can be found at the following link:

www.northampton.gov.uk/lp2sitesconsultation

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Planning Policy team.

Yours

Rob Thornhill
Planning Policy and Heritage Manager