

BRISTOL CORE STRATEGY EXAMINATION INSPECTOR'S HEARING AGENDA

Agenda for Issue 6 - Infrastructure (Wednesday 30 June, 9.30 start as previously indicated).

1. My previous set of questions under 6.1 sought clarification of various matters. The Council has updated the IDP (June 2010 CDE95) and revised the projects which are regarded as *essential* and *desirable*. The Roger Tym study has been published and discussed. I have no further questions on this overall background material. Any discussion?

Section 6.1 Transport

2. The Core Strategy refers to major transport schemes which are in the Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP). These major schemes are being taken forward in bids for Regional Funding through the West of England Partnership and some are at an advanced stage of scheme progression. A number of these schemes extend beyond the City boundary.

3. Are the cross boundary schemes in the JLTP being advanced in the emerging Core Strategies of the adjoining authorities in a manner consistent with the Bristol City Core Strategy?

4. In the emerging draft JLTP3, do the major schemes referred to in the Core Strategy continue to be taken forward in a similar manner to the current JLTP? Are there any substantially different proposals suggested in that document which the Core Strategy might need to accommodate or facilitate in the future?

5. Progression of bids for these major schemes through the Regional Funding Allocation is currently on hold until the national Spending Review is completed in October 2010. It is highly likely that available funding will be less than previously envisaged. What are the consequences for the Core Strategy if there is significant delay in the progression of any of these schemes? Does it have flexibility to respond to any such changing circumstances? Should any flexibility be made explicit and contingencies highlighted?

6. Parties seeking significant changes to the Core Strategy's transport proposals will already be aware that I can make changes to the document only if there is unsoundness. There is no purpose in discussing the detailed merits of alternative projects unless there is clear evidence that the Core Strategy's approach is unsound and must be changed. Drawing from the main suggestions in the parties' statements the following initial questions arise: Is the Core Strategy unsound because of a failure to identify:

- The need for a transport interchange at Temple Meads Station?
- More detail/different specification and/or amended routes of the proposed rapid transit schemes?
- A requirement for an integrated transport authority for the Bristol sub-region?
- The need for additional track between Temple Meads and Bristol Parkway or any other rail infrastructure improvements identified in the Greater Western Rail Utilisation Study? Is this particular rail infrastructure improvement an inevitable requirement to achieve the outputs of the Greater Bristol Metro which is already identified in BCS10? If it is not necessary for soundness to identify such matters as *essential infrastructure* is it a consequence of the Core Strategy's overall transport

intentions that the implementation of such projects should be protected from prejudicial development?

I need to make clear to representors that I would have great difficulty in concluding that any change relating to a transport project which is not identified as a priority in the JLTP, not currently being progressed for funding and (where crossing the city boundary) not reflected in adjoining Core Strategies, would itself be sound.

7. I note minor modification C.10.10 refers to safeguarding *where appropriate existing transport facilities such as rail depots*. Would this aim be effective in advance of the adoption of the Site Allocations DPD without a headline to this effect in policy BCS10?

8. Notwithstanding the above, I would suggest that the references to rail schemes in policy BCS10 and 4.10.9 could be expressed more clearly, distinguishing the different projects (as itemised in the IDP). *Possible reopening of rail lines and the provision of new stations* is ambiguous, given that there is a specific prioritised RFA scheme (the Portishead Rail Corridor) and an identified, more aspirational, project on the city boundary (the Henbury loop). I would envisage any clearer text being a minor change.

9. Does the possibility of a new station at Ashley Hill (listed in the table in the Council's statement in response to questions in 6.3) form part of any of the 3 major projects referred to above? If not what is its status?

10. Could the order of priority of modes listed in BCS10 lead to any unintended consequences, such as new walking or cycling routes prejudicing public transport proposals? Could any such unintended consequences (or fear of such consequences) be avoided by the preface: *without prejudice to the implementation of the major transport schemes listed above, proposals will...* (This would be a minor change).

11. Is the inclusion of the Callington Link in policy BCS10 justified and appropriate?

Section 6.3 Green Infrastructure

I have programmed this topic next because of the overlap of participants with the first matter below.

12. Is there any conflict between the identification and purpose of Green Infrastructure corridors and the implementation of the transport proposals in BCS10?

(This might be the opportunity for an adjournment for coffee)

13. Policy BCS9. Does the Council's suggested change clarify the ambiguity in the previous wording (*unavoidable*)? Is this change sound?

14. Is the Council's suggested clarification regarding where standards for open space in new developments will be set out clear and is it sound? Could this be a minor change?

15. Does the Core Strategy make clear the Council's intended future approach to the identification of Bristol Wildlife Sites so as to ensure effective delivery when the Proposals Map comes to be changed? Is the approach (as clarified) justified and appropriate?

16. In response to my questions, the Council's statement indicates that it is not the intention to continue with the designation of the *prominent or strategically important landscape features* under policy NE1 of the Local Plan. Is the intention to dispense with something previously regarded as a "strategic" designation a matter that should be clearly signposted in the Core Strategy? If so, is the intention (as clarified) justified and appropriate?

(The above 2 matters are likely to be informed by my proposed short additional hearing session on superseded/saved policies and the Proposals Map on Tuesday 29th after Issue 5.)

Section 6.2 Infrastructure and Developer contributions

17. The Council has accepted a number of my suggestions to clarify the wording of policies BCS11 and BCS12. Is the revised wording and accompanying text for BCS11 and BCS12 sound? (The changes to the 2nd paragraph of BCS11 seem confused. Is not the agreed approach something like: *development will provide or contribute towards the provision of measures which mitigate the impact of the development?*)

Simon Emerson
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25 June 2010