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VALE OF GLAMORGAN LDP HEARING SESSION 17: TRANSPORT

23rd MARCH 2016

STATEMENT OF DINAS POWYS COMMUNITY COUNCIL, ID 2253

Question 3. Policy SP7: 'Transportation' sets out the Key Priorities for the delivery of Strategic Transport Infrastructure. These priorities include: various highway schemes (Policy SP7 - 1, 2, 3, 4); the electrification of the Rail Network (Policy SP7 - 5); improvements to the cycle network (Policy SP7 - 6, 7); a park and ride facility (Policy SP7 - 8); and bus priority measures (Policy SP7 - 9).

a. Do the identified priorities reflect the need to reduce the reliance on the private car and promote sustainable forms of transport? Will the priorities deliver the aims of LDP Objective 3?

No – Dinas Powys Community Council (DPCC) do not consider that the identified priorities do reflect the need to reduce the reliance on the private car and promote sustainable forms of transport.

A key use of the car in this area is related to travel to/from work, with the highest proportion of in/out of all the local authority areas in Wales (RTP, Table 2.2). In the Dinas Powys area much of this is to Cardiff and much is by car. Given the location of the majority of the population in Penarth, Barry and Dinas Powys and the significant problems that already exist on the highway network, a key priority of Policy should be to address these. Instead:

- The proposed highway improvements (Proposal Nos 1-4) are unrelated to the main traffic movements within the Vale;
- The proposed cycle routes (Proposal Nos 6 & 7) are only likely to be used for leisure purposes, or by a very few cyclists, given they do not reflect the main travel routes between residential areas and employment locations. Cycling is also not a mode of travel that can be utilised by all members of the community and thus for many residents of Dinas Powys is an irrelevance;
- The proposed Bus Park & Ride at Cosmeston (Proposal No 8) is irrelevant for anyone in the Vale, except perhaps the residents of Sully. As set out in the DPCC representations, the location of the site means it will not be accessible or attractive to residents of Barry, Penarth or Dinas Powys or elsewhere in the Vale; and
- The bus priority measures are going to make very little difference in overall journey time for those travelling from or through Dinas Powys, as the buses will be caught up in the traffic congestion that already exists in Dinas Powys and which will inevitably get worse with the proposed housing development.

Even Proposal 5, the electrification of the Vale of Glamorgan rail line, whilst supported by DPCC, will have a limited effect on its own. More trains are needed to accommodate existing passenger numbers as the trains on the Barry to Cardiff line, via Dinas Powys are already crowded in peak times. However, without the supporting infrastructure such as Park & Ride facilities at the stations, the trains are not going to be attractive to many of those currently travelling by car. Within Dinas Powys the only P&R is at Eastbrook and the car park there is already at capacity for much of the week.

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This is despite the need for such facilities being recognised for a number of years. The Sustainable Transport Background Paper (SD63) notes:

“Likewise, Eastbrook has been identified as a growth area for park and ride facilities and land recommended to be protected for such provision.

It has been recognised that the size of the land identified is surplus to requirements in the short to medium term, but can be built in stages as the demand grows (Jacobs Study 2010)”.

However, the Paper goes on to note

“However, this land has been identified for housing in the emerging LDP and therefore not available for park & ride” (para 13.12).

“Whilst expansion of rail park and ride facilities has been identified as required in both Cogan and Eastbrook, no land has been identified as suitable to the required projected future demand”(para 13.14).

As a result the proposals in Policy SP7 will have minimal effect on providing greater access to sustainable forms of travel for the residents of Dinas Powys. It is also unlikely to influence the travel choices of the many Vale residents who currently drive through Dinas Powys to access employment opportunities in Cardiff.

b. Are the proposals supported by the Regional Transport Plan?

The Regional Transport Plan (RTP) dates from March 2010 and thus is already nearly 6 years old and reaching the end of the 5-year programme of projects.

As such it is not surprising that those proposals included in the LDP are largely consistent with the RTP. However, that is not to say that the LDP is consistent with RTP. As set out in DPCC’s original representations, the RTP recognises the transport problems with the Barry Waterfront to Cardiff link (DPCC reps, para 2.6 – 2.9) but the LDP does nothing to address this key problem area.

The RTP also recognises that land should be protected for infrastructure projects (RTP, para 4.4.3) and that some highway investment may be required, where it supports the overall objectives (RTP paras 4.11.1 and 5.8.1).

As such there are other transport proposals, including the Dinas Powys By-pass, that would also be consistent with the RTP and which that are not currently included in the LDP.

Further, the LDP fails to address the RTP requirement to assess and evaluate the problems in the area (RTP, 5.8.5).

c. How would the schemes be funded?

DPCC do not wish to make any additional comments on this.

d. Are there any barriers to the delivery of the proposed infrastructure schemes? Would they be delivered within the Plan period?

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DPC do not wish to make any additional comments on this.

e. What are the implications of such schemes not being delivered as anticipated?

It is the view of the DPC that none of the schemes listed in SP7 will have a significant effect on travel patterns within Dinas Powys. Whether or not the schemes are delivered, the significant, existing problems of traffic congestion, pollution and poor air quality will continue to exist, with major delays to all traffic during peak times but with little encouragement for residents to use alternative, sustainable forms of transport.

The effectiveness of the only proposal that may be able to assist, namely the electrification of the Vale of Glamorgan rail line, will not on its own affect travel choices, as it needs to be accompanied by the development of supporting Park & Ride facilities in the area, if it is to result in any change in modal choice both within Dinas Powys and amongst those travelling from Barry.

The proposed Bus Park & Ride facility at Cosmeston is also of little benefit for the majority of Vale residents, being only conveniently located for the residents of Sully. As such failure to deliver this will have no noticeable effect on the overall transport patterns or modal choice in the Vale.

4. Policy MG16: 'Transport Proposals' allocates land for the proposed transportation schemes, including those identified as priorities in Policy SP7.

a. Are the allocated schemes consistent with national policy/ the Plan's strategy, free of significant constraints, supported by necessary funding and deliverable within the Plan period?

The proposals listed in the Policy which are of relevance to the Dinas Powys area are Numbers 6 (rail electrification), 9 and 10 (Bus Priority schemes) and 17 (Cross Common Road).

The delivery of the rail electrification has already been delayed from the time period envisaged when the LDP was prepared and Network Rail now indicate it is scheduled for 2019-2024. However there are no plans, or identified funding to improve the associated local infrastructure. As such the real benefits of the proposal will not be delivered.

The bus schemes in the area are considered to be the only option for any improvements to the bus services locally but will have minimal effect. The significant constraints that exist on the road network in Dinas Powys itself mean there are no implementable options to support bus priority schemes along most of the route through and beyond Dinas Powys.

As the recent Capita report looking at possible bus priority measures between Dinas Powys and Cardiff (Document **ED24.2**) notes, the junction of Cardiff Road/Murch Road/Millbrook Road, where existing delays are already significant, is restricted and the pedestrian crossing is used by many vulnerable road users (page 3). Further it is noted that there is only one opportunity for additional land in the vicinity and this would be only be of marginal benefit to a small proportion of users turning from Millbrook Road and of no benefit to bus services which do not undertake this movement.

As such the only way to improve the situation at this junction would be for a major change, such as that

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which would result from the removal of all through traffic, such as via the proposed by-pass.

As such the proposals in the LDP may be implementable but are significantly constrained in their ability to resolve the existing and future transport problems. Instead increases in traffic as a result of significant housing development in Dinas, Barry and the Penarth area will inevitably lead to more traffic on the road, and any minor improvements such as proposed will be more than offset by the increase in traffic volumes. The LDP therefore fails to deliver the required transport system necessary to support the population and economy of the Vale.

b. Are the schemes with definitive route alignments appropriately allocated on the Proposals Map? How are those schemes without definitive alignments spatially defined within the Plan?

DPCC do not wish to make any additional comments on this.

c. Policy MG16 identifies a number of infrastructure schemes required to mitigate the impacts of development proposed through the Plan (Highway Impact Assessment, Doc Ref: SD64). How will such schemes be funded/ delivered? Have such requirements been factored into the overall viability of the developments proposed?

It is clear that at least some of the infrastructure schemes required to mitigate the impacts of development proposed through the Plan, have NOT been adequately considered and it is not clear how the schemes will be funded or delivered.

Within Dinas Powys the junction requiring improvement is junction (b) Cardiff Road/Murch Road/Millbrook Road. This road is the main route of just two which provides access/egress for approximately **half of the residential area of Dinas Powys** (see attached plan), the alternative being the currently unsafe bridge crossing at Cross Common Lane.

This junction will inevitably get busier as a result of the proposed allocated housing developments in Dinas Powys (see attached plan) but will also see increased traffic coming to/from Barry as a result of the significant developments proposed there.

However, whilst the need for mitigation resulting from any increase in traffic is noted in the supporting text to Policy MG16, none of the various reports and studies that inform the LDP have been able to identify what mitigation measures would be required and whether they are indeed feasible both physically and financially.

There is also no information to suggest that junction improvements at this location in isolation will actually resolve the problems of congestion along the A4055. Other than looking to introduce bus priority measures towards the Merrie Harrier junction however, no further improvement schemes are listed as being required, although they clearly are.

These problems and shortcomings are clearly illustrated in the recent Planning Committee report related to housing development at Caerleon Road (LDP site allocation MG2 (27) (appln ref 2014/00282/OUT). This states

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“The Council’s Highway Development team.....concur that there is no feasible layout improvement at the Cardiff Road junction that the applicants could undertake to mitigate the impact of their development”.

This is the second largest housing development proposed in Dinas Powys and yet no money to improve this junction is being sought from this development, even though it will directly contribute to traffic using it. It is also clear that there is no infrastructure scheme even identified to mitigate the effects of this and the other proposed housing developments.

5. Are any alternative transport schemes necessary to ensure Plan soundness? If so, why is the submitted Plan unsound (with particular reference to an Alternative Site proposal identified within the Alternative Site Register)?

The DPCC consider that the Plan as it currently stands is unsound as it fails to address major, known problems on the strategic highway network and these have not been taken into account in developing the policies and site allocations set out in the LDP (see original DPCC representations, including para 6.2).

This has implications for many aspects of the LDP and risks the achievement of the economic and environmental objectives both set out in the LDP and sought at a national and regional level (again see original DPCC representations). As set out above, it will also directly affect the extent to which public bus services in the area can be developed as a realistic alternative to the car.

This is considered to be an important issue for the LDP and the area, as failure to resolve the transport problems affecting Dinas Powys also affects travel to/from Barry and Cardiff Airport. This in turn decreases the attractiveness of Barry as a place to live, to undertake business and as a tourist destination, and the use of the Airport, given that the A4055 is one of just 2 main routes from Cardiff to these destinations. This is clearly contrary to the overall objectives of the LDP and specifically para 5.22 bullet 5 (see DPCC original representations).

Our recommendation is that a detailed feasibility study of the highways and transport network in the Dinas Powys area is urgently required, including consideration of the need for the Dinas Powys by-pass. Further, unless it can be shown that the by-pass is not required, then the route of it should continue to be protected in the LDP, to ensure it can be delivered in the future if alternative options are shown to be impractical or not feasible.

As set out above, the transport schemes included within the LDP do not address the acknowledged and serious traffic problems experienced in Dinas Powys but ignoring them will not make them go away.

It is therefore considered that deleting the safeguarded route of the proposed by-pass from the Plan is premature, unless and until a realistic alternative transport package is identified and delivered. It is accepted that at the moment there is no clear source of funding for such a route, but it may be the only possible option to address the current and future transport needs in this critical location. As such it could be funded by a future CIL or an alternative source of funding could emerge during the plan period.

6. Does the Plan provide robust monitoring and review mechanisms that will enable it to respond effectively and efficiently to changing circumstances, including the failure to deliver transport infrastructure as anticipated?



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The DPCC does not consider that the Plan provides robust monitoring and review mechanisms that will enable it to respond to changing circumstances.

There is already clear evidence of transport problems that need addressing within the Vale and Dinas Powys in particular, but the LDP does not respond to these. Thus there is no alternative if, as expected, the limited measures proposed (bus priority in a few locations outside of Dinas Powys and rail electrification) fail to deliver.

7. Any Other Matters

The effect of traffic congestion on the local community is also an important consideration. Air quality and noise levels are already poor along the A4055 and this is a particular concern given the proximity of the Primary School to the Murch Road/Cardiff Road junction.

Noise levels are shown on the attached map.

The Vale's monitoring of air quality also shows there are existing problems in the area. The most recent Monitoring Report (2013 Air quality Progress Report for the Vale of Glamorgan) notes that there is already one location in Dinas Powys (Railway Terrace, Cardiff Road)

*“where road traffic emissions of **nitrogen dioxide (NO2)** are at, or close to, the relevant annual average concentration of 40 ug/m³” (Executive Summary and para 4.1).*

The same report appears to show rising levels of NO₂ at the Infant School and the Health Centre (Table 2.6).



