



**EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC OF
THE BASINGSTOKE & DEANE LOCAL PLAN**

**FURTHER SUBMISSION
ON BEHALF OF
THE BASINGSTOKE
SOUTH-WEST ACTION GROUP (SWAG)**

Hearing Session(s): Issue 9 – Transport - Fiveways Junction

Hearing Dates: 11 November 2015

Addressing: Inspector’s Questions 19.1.3 Is the proposed improvement of the Fiveways junction at Kempshott justified; will the increased capacity cater for likely traffic flows up to 2029; and how user-friendly will it be for both pedestrians and cyclists? Links with MF23 work requested by Inspector at Manydown session on 20 October and 5 November

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**FURTHER SUBMISSION OF MICHAEL HENRY BSc CEng MICE
ON BEHALF OF
THE BASINGSTOKE SOUTH-WEST ACTION GROUP (SWAG)**

**Covering objections to Transport Assessment and Sustainability of proposed allocation at
Area 6A Manydown Policy SS3.10 Clause 'u'.**

Introduction

- 1.1 This additional evidence on behalf of SWAG updates up my previous submission (PS/04/56/e 30 October 2015) relating to traffic assessments of the signal controlled junction known as 'Fiveways Junction' between Pack Lane, Buckskin Lane and Kempshott Lane. My update responds specifically to the Joint Technical Note by the LHA LPA and SS3.10 Area 6A promoters dated 06 November 2015¹; and accordingly the following text is referenced to the paragraph numbering of that document. For completeness I request that my new evidence (this document) and my previous evidence on the matter (PS/04/56/e) are read together.
- 1.2 Given the very late and piecemeal way in which the authorities and site promoters have prepared and submitted evidence to this Local Plan EiP, I have been unable to discuss or clarify with them the many technical queries arising from the data provided, nor have I been able to obtain a good deal of essential data that their published documents omit. I have therefore been unable to agree any common ground ahead of the EiP discussions programmed for Wednesday 11 November. I apologise for this unsatisfactory situation which arises entirely as a consequence of actions beyond my, or SWAG's, ability to control.
- 1.3 In these comments I refer to the current proposals for the junction as being shown on AECOM drawing FIVE-ACH-00-SK-CE-00002 P1. AECOM's latest report also refers to drawing FIVE-ACH-00-SK-CE-00005 P1 (issued 06 november2015), which from my reading shows the same carriageway improvements but is different only in as much as it adds notes and shows the highway boundary surrounding the junction.

¹ PS/05/23 a0 – c)

Summary and Conclusions

- 2.1 All parties to this EiP agree that improvements are required at this busy bottleneck to accommodate adjacent development proposals. There are however numerous straightforward errors inconsistencies and impracticalities in the current road scheme submitted to this EiP which render it unsound not only in terms of its traffic capacity analysis but also its sustainability for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as the physical ability to build the proposed layout without recourse to adjoining third party land ownership.
- 2.2 Therefore despite the post facto rationalisation now being undertaken to support the draft allocation of 300 houses at Area 6A, I remain of the view that the potential for deliverable traffic capacity improvements at Fiveways junction, consistent with LP policies for accessibility and sustainability, still remains problematic.
- 2.3 I submit therefore that the Local Plan should either delete Area 6A from its draft housing allocation, or at the very least policy SS3.10 u) should be drafted circumspectly to recognise that the amount of any residential development proposed on Area 6A off Pack Lane should be proscribed by the degree to which a demonstrably deliverable package of road improvements can be provided at Fiveways by the Area 6A. These works should be designed in a manner that enhances traffic capacity sufficiently without compromise to pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities.
- 2.4 At present even if the Fiveways junction proposals now put forward on behalf of the promoters of Area 6A are accepted as feasible and deliverable no transport case has yet been made to justify more than 300 houses on this land. At the very least therefore Policy SS3.10 u) should be curtailed to limit Area 6A to a yield of **“no more than 300 units.”**
- 2.5 If Area 6A is to be developed the LP should also clarify the intentions for vehicular access to the site through Dorset Crescent.

Traffic Data and Modelling

- 3.1 The following comments refer to the Joint Technical Note dated 06 November by HCC entitled "*BDBC Local Plan Examination Fiveways Junction Update*."²
- 3.2 Para 7 of HCC's Note is misleadingly incorrect in implying that the manual traffic counts undertaken on 09 September at Fiveways are fully consistent with DfT guidance in webTAG Unit M1.2 *Data Sources and Surveys*. The precise guidance given in para 3.3.6 of that document specifically excludes dates in September involving school holidays or return to school weeks. (my underlining); I have previously noted the start of term times (para 1.30, PS/04/56/e) of the local sixth form college and of BCoT which both occurred in the week of the AECOM survey. I do not know the impact that this has on the base data used by AECOM but as also note previously I suspect that neither HCC nor AECOM have either.
- 3.3 The difficulty I have with clarification given in para 8 of PS/05/23 a) about the confusion in the original AECOM report between design years 2017 and 2021 is that from the published data there is absolutely no way of checking its veracity. AECOM have still to provide the traffic numbers, let alone the build up on which all its subsequent interim design year signal analyses are based.
- 3.4 More generally, I am surprised that such an obvious discrepancy or confusion about which year was to be tested in the AECOM report was either allowed to go entirely unnoticed until I pointed it out, or that neither AECOM nor HCC thought to clarify matters in their original texts. Either way it does not point to a particularly careful examination by HCC ahead of its rapid endorsement (16 October 2015) of the AECOM report completed the previous day.
- 3.5 The latest technical note reproduces the original AECOM capacity assessment of present day conditions (Table 1) based on 2015 traffic data and now provides a revised summary table (Tables 2) for 2021 to replace that of Table 6 in the earlier report. It also gives a new summary assessment (Table 3) for the 2029 scenario, all with the assumption that Area 6A is developed and delivers improvements to Fiveways Junction.
- 3.6 Other than noting the removal of the previous 11% leakage of site generated traffic through Dorset Crescent, which self evidently would increase traffic through the junction, no full explanation is given as to why the LINSIG assessment concluded in October for 2021 differs from that undertaken a few weeks later. Notably I cannot explain why the "headline"

² PS/05/23 a)

practical reserve capacity (PRC) in both peak hours has improved slightly by about 1% between the two tables

- 3.7 Unfortunately, I am unable to verify any of the findings in these tables, and in this regard I suggest that unless it is privy to unpublished data I am in exactly the same position as HCC, because none of the AECOM work provides any of the underlying traffic numbers or other input parameters used in any of their LINSIG assessments. This is important because without the opportunity to undertake a thorough independent scrutiny of these data, which I suspect HCC has yet to do, it is impossible to accept that they present a robust analysis of future conditions.
- 3.8 The uncertainties I have about the robustness of the assessments before this EiP are reinforced when I examine the entirety of the evidence base available to this EiP, which includes the original work by PB set out in pages 106-109 of the LP Transport Assessment³. In doing so I am struck by the wide variation in the modelled outcomes presented for Fiveways Junction. Capacity assessments for the junction are repeatedly presented with great precision only to be then discarded in favour of new more recent forecasts claimed to be the outcome of better input data.
- 3.9 Refinement of traffic forecasts is normal as part of a robust assessment process but I am not persuaded in this case that these changes, presented with absolutely no supporting data to allow anyone to validate its conclusions, give adequate confidence on which to base the present LP policies for Area 6A.
- 3.10 The Inspector and those like me seeking to scrutinise the evidence as presented are therefore faced at this late stage of the EiP process with no other choice than to simply trust the conclusions reached by the consultants unreservedly. I express no doubts about the integrity of those involved in this but it is clearly an unsatisfactory situation which leads to the inevitable conclusion that there has been a lack of rigour in the matter which should have led HCC (unless it has evidence it has not shared with the public) to be more circumspect about its endorsement of the current traffic forecasting at this junction.
- 3.11 On the basis of current TEMPRO modelling I note that all the forecasts at Fiveways show consistent Degrees of Saturation in excess of 100%, negative PRC, and notable mean maximum queues (MMQ) worsening appreciably to the end the LP period.
- 3.12 In mitigation of this outcome, PB for BDBC refer frequently to the fact that their TEMPRO modelling has been such that it inevitably results in a worst case traffic data base for analysis which then excuses their assumptions about low trip rates and subsequent

³ Examination Library TR01

decisions about the quantum of road improvements needed at individual junctions through the Borough. The implication of the repeated assurances (see para 20 MF23) about replacing PB's TEMPRO work with the much awaited North Hampshire Transport Model (NHTM) is that this more sophisticated model when it is completed will effectively disperse the traffic problems of Basingstoke thereby reducing the mitigation measures required for the LP developments planned in the emerging LP. In some areas that might turn out to be the case, equally the new model may throw up new issues that are not fully appreciated at present. Either way no one can predict such outcomes with any certainty, and it seems to me that placing reliance on particular outcomes from the new modelling in establishing LP policies would be unwise.

- 3.13 I urge caution therefore and ask only that HCC should withdraw what has all the hall marks of being a hastily drafted endorsement of junction improvements at Fiveways and that the local council in putting forward Area 6A in its draft housing allocation should take due regard of the uncertainties that still apply to the traffic modelling of this junction.

Cycle and Pedestrian Provision

- 4.1 I do not understand in any meaningful way AECOM's comment in para 31 which emphasises what I take to be a previous reference in the report (presumably para 27) as to how cyclist provision is treated in the various design year scenarios tested in their LINSIG work. In my experience all junction capacity modelling is carried out on the basis of a highway design that illustrates the feasibility of the proposals and allows all the required geometric parameters to be measured off for input into the computerised model
- 4.2 The plans before this EiP however clearly show substantial modification to cycle provision at the junction (drawing CE-000005 P1 helpfully lists them all) but the text of the report avers that none of them are taken into account by the model. Such gross inconsistency is not creditable, and in my experience is utterly unsound practice. Regardless however of whether or not this stricture is accepted, it immediately begs the question as to why a plan showing the actual modelled intentions at Fiveways is not presented at this EiP. Unfortunately, as I have noted previously in respect of traffic flows, the AECOM claim about how it has treated cycle provision in its modelling (i.e. it has not changed it by one iota) is not verifiable from the data provided in its report.

- 4.3 Unless HCC is privy to other unpublished data on the matter I cannot understand why it has not queried this anomaly or how it has been able to satisfy itself about the adequacy of the junction for cycle provision.
- 4.4 In my earlier, (PS/04/56e 30 October), submissions on this matter (page 7 para 1.24) I referred to the fact that the approved plan was incomplete and that it did not even show the back edge of the proposed footways. I described the plan as sketchy, pointing out as well that it had no regard to level difference between the highway and the adjoining land that would make connections to some existing driveways problematic.
- 4.5 I and others have therefore repeatedly requested and have been promised better information about the AECOM proposals so as to confirm that adequate footway provision could be provided within highway limits and that private access to adjoining properties could be retained satisfactorily.
- 4.6 No such plan has yet been forthcoming. Even the latest plan FIVE-ACH-AH-00-SK-CE-00005 dated 06 Nov 2015 provides no further highway detailing other than that already shown on the plans it prepared in September (FIVE-ACH-AH-00-SK-CE-00002).
- 4.7 The misgivings I have expressed therefore about this scheme being impracticable within highway limits remain as yet unresolved.
- 4.8 Finally, I point out that the plan FIVE-ACH-00-SK-CE-00002 P1 approved by HCC does not accord with relevant sections of the Traffic Signs Manual which provides national guidance for the road markings at signalised junctions. Normally I would not be concerned with such detail at this stage but it affects the safe positioning of stop lines at the junction, and this fundamental error only strengthens my suspicions that this plan has not been competently prepared and has not yet been adequately checked and audited for technical or safety sufficiency.