

Friends of Riverside, Campaign for Better Transport and other groups' objection to the Wessex Field road development in Bournemouth

January 2018

We, the undersigned, write to object to Phase 1 road building at A338 on the basis it ignores the Council's own policies. The junction is on Green Belt, the new road will generate traffic and create a cut-through to Iford exacerbating air pollution, road injuries and ill-health. It is out of kilter with local policy which promises "new development . . . by sustainable modes."

Against Department for Transport guidance, the Council's methodology used to 'help prove' the proposed A338 junction has not fully (or even partially) considered any alternatives – improved rail, trams, guided bus routes – even though this is a requirement of overall scheme development and appraisal.

Rather than out-of-town sprawl, the Council should develop sustainably: use existing parcels of undeveloped land near public transport; make more effort to use unoccupied town centre office space. Hospital transport needs could be met through sustainable modes and additional accesses from Castle Lane.

In the Littledown & Iford ward 75% of people commute by car and most of these car journeys are less than 2 miles. This underlying issue needs addressing instead of blindly adopting the "build more roads" mantra. We know from the National Travel Survey that there are no time savings in the long run from road building projects. People take the benefit of road improvements to travel further, not to save time, which adds to traffic (induced traffic) and restores congestion to what it was. New roads are saturated within 5 years of completion.

A previous Conservative Government established the 'Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment' which reported that additional traffic growth creates a vicious spiral of increasing private motorised travel. More road space equals more car use equals less public transport use. Fares go up, frequency goes down, so more people transfer to cars.

Individual road schemes of the scale proposed cost millions of pounds and have 'negligible effect on local development' (Leitch, G. 1977). In other words, we can't road-build our way out of congestion, only into it.

Phase 1 is a case of throwing good money after bad. By contrast investment benefits for trams last over 30 years and beyond.

Having been presented with a single car-based option the LEP, businesses and Hospital had little choice but to support it. If the Council proceeds, we'll be £8 million poorer with Green Belt lost forever. Added pollution and inactivity mean more asthma, obesity and heart disease. An unhealthy scheme supported by the very organisation – the Hospital – who will end up shouldering the costly burden of ill-health which will result from it.

Cllr Greene says congestion is “acting as a barrier to growth” (Bournemouth Herald, 7/12/17), but more roads equal more congestion. London is the biggest business attractor in the UK because it offers good non-car transport. New development is car-free (Draft London Transport Strategy 2017). Given the choice, Bournemouth businesses would also opt for a healthy, long-term solution, especially as a healthier workforce is more productive.

The young are less interested in cars, more interested in cycling, yet they are the ones who will inherit this polluting, inefficient infrastructure.

We believe in creating a place that puts people before cars where residents, workers and visitors can safely walk, cycle or take public transport and urge you to reconsider this damaging road scheme.

- **Dr Adrian Davis**, Visiting Professor of Transport & Health, University of the West of England
- **Stephen Joseph OBE**, Chief Executive of Campaign for Better Transport
- **Dr Felicity Rice**, Fizz Bikes
- **Simon O'Connor**, Greenpeace
- **Angela Pooley**, East Dorset Friends of the Earth
- **Peter Henshaw & Peter Aldous**, Dorset Cyclists' Network
- **Paul Turner**, Cycling UK, Right to Ride Representative, Poole & Bournemouth
- **Dilys Gartside**, Proprietor, Cyclewise
- **Friends of Riverside**
- **Poole Agenda 21**
- **Dorset Equality Group**
- **Road Danger Reduction Forum**