

Reasons for opposing the latest B&NES road proposals

Closing date for responses: Tuesday 20 December

The latest B&NES proposals are not designed to improve or regenerate Radstock.

The leaflet everyone received through the door is entitled *Tackling congestion in Radstock and kick-starting the economy*.

But the latest proposals do nothing for Radstock – they will lead to people avoiding Radstock and the only benefits will be to those who see Radstock as a traffic junction. Radstock is a town which deserves regeneration. B&NES should be listening to what businesses and residents want. What's in it for Radstock?

We urge everyone to write to: transportation@bathnes.gov.uk and object to these proposals. You can find a full list of contacts at the end of this document. Please write to as many as you can.

Below are some of the major reasons for objecting:

General points

- When the Traffic Orders were published initially, and on many occasions before, Radstock had rejected the plans, but, undeterred, B&NES is now trying to get the answer it wants.
- These proposals are not about Radstock. It is unclear what they are about. Previously the closure of Frome Road was about providing support and access to the new proposed housing development, but now the goal posts have been moved and it's about tackling congestion.
- Why is a new link road necessary now that the Frome Road is going to remain open?
- Traffic congestion is an inevitability in all towns now. Radstock suffers build ups of traffic at peak times like everywhere else. The proposed plans appear to be a very expensive and impractical way of dealing with this issue.
- The data on which these plans are based is not at all clear. We know that it is from 2009, so at least two years old, it is highly selective and it is not able to detail what happens to traffic entering Radstock – which route does it take out or does it stay in Radstock?
- Not all traffic movements are included even though they may contribute to what happens at peak and other times.
- B&NES says that 40 jobs will be created but nowhere do they say how, whether they are permanent or temporary. With the sorting office facing difficulties getting trucks into their yard in Fortescue Road and traders feeling the pinch as Radstock becomes a less attractive place to shop, there may well be more job losses than the 40 unsubstantiated gains claimed.
- Paul Crossly, the leader of B&NES, has stated clearly that if there are no houses, there will be no road, so why are they rushing through this unpopular measure.
- The link road will effectively put paid to the reinstatement of the Radstock/Frome rail link.
- Radstock has a vibrant town centre, has great potential as a tourist destination, having been described by English Heritage as 'the best-preserved mining town centre in the country'. Yet B&NES is determined to promote a traffic system which will make the town more like a traffic junction and less like a place to visit and work in.

- Nowhere in the B&NES leaflet, described by many as propaganda, is there any indication of how this will 'boost the town's economy' as B&NES claims.
- The questions asked in the *Feedback Form* are not the ones that are relevant to the needs of Radstock. B&NES is not interested in whether people want the link road, or two way traffic in the Street or a reversal of traffic direction in Fortescue Road. Write in your own questions and answers.
- Radstock residents pay council tax to B&NES. It is time for B&NES to take its responsibilities to the town seriously and not squander money on unwanted and unworkable proposals. It is time for B&NES to make some serious investment in the town, based on meaningful dialogue with those who count – the traders and residents.
- The Council has failed to show how its estimates for moving the double mini-roundabout have been arrived at, furnishing nothing more than some vague estimates for meaningless items.

Road speeds and traffic congestion

- Increasing speeds through Radstock are not in the interests of the town which will become nothing more than a housing estate at a traffic junction
- Speeds and amounts of time saved are suspect – to achieve the savings claimed, drivers will have to exceed the speed limit, thus defeating the declared object of limiting speeds
- Traffic jams created by the double roundabout at the Frome Road (A362) junction with the Bath Road (A367) plus the new roundabouts at the junction of Wells Road and the Street and on the Frome Road with the proposed link road will result in continuing and new traffic jams
- Data and modelling on speeds and traffic volume appear highly selective and are unrecognizable to many who regularly use the roads involved.

Traffic flows and paths

- Two way traffic in the Street:
 - Two way traffic will increase the total volume of vehicles using the Street.
 - The 7.5 tonne limit for vehicles doesn't apply to the Street which would still have multi-axle vehicles of 40+ tonnes travelling in both directions to and from the Haydon area and beyond.
 - Trucks travelling in opposite directions will be unable to pass when there is anyone parked.
 - There will be increased noise and air pollution compromising the health and well-being of residents and traders.
 - The buildings of the conservation area will be structurally compromised by the increased volume of traffic.
 - Two way traffic does not allow adequate parking for those using the amenities in the Street including the shops, the Methodist Church and the Doctor's surgery.
 - The essential traders service road will be exiting onto the new roundabout which one B&NES official has described as 'acceptable but not ideal'.
- Reverse traffic flow in Fortescue Road:
 - All traffic exiting Fortescue Road, regardless of destination, will be forced to turn left and go the proposed new roundabout at the end of

the Street where it will then have to do a complete turn doubling back on itself, if going to Somervale Road, Frome Road, Waterloo Road, Whisty and Tynning, Bath Old Road, Bath and Clandown

- Fortescue Road shops will suffer a decline in trade, especially casual shoppers who currently park up briefly and drop in to shops and who will not want to get involved in the above traffic and will seek alternative places to shop
 - Sorting office vehicles will be unable to enter their yard
 - The limited parking available will be dangerous because the driver will be expected to come out blind into the traffic as they will be sitting on the kerb side, rather than the traffic side of the road
 - Highly likely that Fortescue Road will be reduced to a deserted patch in the middle of a larger traffic complex.
- Where Church Street joins the Street/new link road, outside the Victoria Hall, it will have to give way to traffic in both directions travelling along the link road. This will cause major hold ups for all traffic from Haydon and at peak times such as start and end of school day at St Nicholas primary school.

Public Transport

- Buses will enter and exit the town centre in a variety of ways all of which result in bus stops being further away from shops and on the proposed link road
- Buses will be running in both directions in the Street
- Buses from Wells/Midsomer Norton direction wishing to travel on to Bath will have to negotiate the new roundabout at the bottom of Wells Hill, turn right into the Street, go to the bus stops on the new link road and then out onto the Frome Road roundabout, left and back to the double roundabouts to travel on
- Buses from Frome and Bath directions will turn left onto link road from Charlton Frome Road roundabout, stop at bus stops on link road, then go along the Street to the new roundabout where they will have to re-enter the Wells/Midsomer Norton/Bath traffic
- In addition buses from Bath will have to turn left into Frome Road at the current double roundabout, then head towards the new Charlton roundabout
- It is impossible for many large vehicles to turn left out of the Street into Fortescue Road, owing the configuration of the corner

Parking

- There is a net loss of parking in Radstock town centre as a result of these proposals. According to B&NES the loss is 24 spaces.
- In order to give the impression that the loss is only 24, which would be bad enough, B&NES has now used 'new public parking (44 spaces) within the NNR development' to increase the parking. When questioned they agreed that this would be the only parking available to residents in any new development, that it was not for them exclusively as it will be on a public highway. In other words there will be an overall increase in residential and it will have no parking.
- There are going to be three parking spaces on the new link road – this seems highly unlikely to work as the new link road will also have two pedestrian crossings, bus stops in both directions and a roundabout at the Frome Road end.
- A large number of pedestrian crossings has been introduced into the plan to counter accusations that pedestrians will be at risk. Parking is not allowed on zigzags either side of crossings, so there will be less parking
- As long as there is no affordable and reliable public transport system, cars will remain the only option for many people living in and visiting Radstock.

Heavy goods vehicles

- The ban on vehicles over 7.5 tonnes applies only to the link road
- Vehicles of all sizes will be allowed to travel in both directions on the Street and elsewhere.
- Buses are exempt from the ban.
- The limit will be impossible to police/enforce.
- HGVs turning from Wells Hill, and therefore, at the bottom of a very steep incline, into the Street will have to negotiate the new roundabout at the end of the Street (where the Jubilee Oak currently stands) and deal with a very difficult camber.
- Even 7.5 tonne vehicles can be very large and overall length, according to the Road Haulage Association, may be up to 12 metres (maximum width 2.55 metres), so any suggestion that there will only be small vehicles once this ban is in place is incorrect.

Roundabouts

- The current proposals retain the double mini-roundabouts at the A362/367 junction and involve two new ones.
One will replace the Jubilee Oak at the junction of Wells Hill and the Street; the other will join the Frome Road to the new link road at Charltons
- Although traffic can do a full turn on a roundabout, it is not good practice to build such turns into traffic planning (see section on Fortescue Road, left turn only). We have been unable to confirm this, but we have been advised that such practices are actually against highways regulations – confirmation is currently being sought.

WRITE TO YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Ask them to help, tell them why the plans are a bad idea:

- **B&NES Transportation Team**
Floor 2, Riverside, Temple Street, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1LA
Transportation@bathnes.gov.uk
- **Jacob Rees-Mogg MP**, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA Email:
jacob.reesmogg.mp@parliament.uk
- **Cllr Simon Allen**, 23 Waldegrave Terrace, Radstock BA3 3EY Email:
Simon.Allen@bathnes.gov.uk
- **Cllr Eleanor Jackson**, 4 Meadow View, Radstock BA3 3QT
Email: Eleanor.Jackson@bathnes.gov.uk

WRITE TO THE PRESS, RING LOCAL RADIO:

- **The Journal**: Wansdyke Business Centre, Unit 22, Midsomer Enterprise Park, Radstock Road, Midsomer Norton BA3 2BB.
mnrjournal@btconnect.com
- **Somerset Guardian**: 78b High Street, Midsomer Norton BA3 2DE.
S.holliday@somersetguardian.co.uk
- **BBC Somerset**:(01823) 323 95 somerset@bbc.co.uk
- **B&NES Transportation Team**
Floor 2, Riverside, Temple Street, Keynsham, Bristol BS31 1LA
Transportation@bathnes.gov.uk