

Public Participation

Statement/Questions from Mrs Margaret Willmot, Salisbury City Councillor, (Fisherton & Bemerton Village Ward)

Transport Planning in Salisbury

Salisbury has more sustainable transport patterns than the Wiltshire average, with lower levels of car ownership and higher levels of walking, cycling and public transport usage. As the city centre is an Air Quality Management Area it is particularly important that these sustainable transport modes are supported and encouraged as Salisbury expands. It is very disappointing that there seems to have been a failure of transport planning in Salisbury to work towards this goal. To mention a few specifics:

- The Salisbury Vision has designated both Salisbury bus station and the Millstream Coach Park for redevelopment, so these are now proposed development sites in the adopted South Wiltshire Core Strategy. We were told by the Salisbury Vision over 4 years ago that 'A Transport and Movement strategy will be delivered as a priority' and that the Vision would 'work with bus and rail companies to develop a transport strategy that makes public transport in Salisbury the preferred form of transport'. But as yet there is no Transport & Movement Strategy and Salisbury's bus station is now scheduled to close on 4th January 2014, with extra bus stops being added to some of Salisbury's already congested pavements. No-one in Salisbury believes this to be an acceptable solution, and the City Council have applied to have the bus station registered as an asset of community value. **While the sale of the bus station was a decision by the Go-Ahead group, Wiltshire Council have let us down by failing to consider the requirement for a bus station in Salisbury and considering alternatives before designating the site for redevelopment in the Core Strategy.**
- With Salisbury Cathedral being a prime tourist attraction, and with the proximity to Stonehenge, the Millstream Coach Park may well contain up to 30 coaches at any one time in the peak season and the city currently has Coach Friendly status which encourages coach operators to visit. **There is no mention of coaches in the summary Salisbury Transport Strategy and significant investment will be required if Salisbury is to retain Coach Friendly status when the current coach park facilities are removed as part of the Maltings redevelopment.**
- It is understood that half a million pounds from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) bid originally earmarked for interchange improvements based on a re-opening of Salisbury station's northern entrance has now been re-allocated elsewhere in Wiltshire. It seems difficulties encountered included the on-going costs of manning an entrance. **It is not clear whether options for an unmanned barrier entrance, as introduced elsewhere (e.g. Exeter Central, Truro & Taunton), were considered.**

- In November 2011 in response to a question to Cabinet (15.11.2011) regarding the Salisbury Transport Strategy it was stated that “The Strategy is due to be finalised in June 2012 following consultation in the new year”. **There has still been no consultation on a Salisbury Transport Strategy nearly two years later.**

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that Salisbury’s transport needs are given a low priority by Wiltshire Council. While the recent formation of transport Working Groups led by the Salisbury Vision is welcome these groups are only fire-fighting some of the city centre issues which have arisen due to lack of proper on-going long term strategic transport planning. I would welcome a response to the following:

- 1) **Will the future need for bus and coach infrastructure in Salisbury now be properly assessed and incorporated into development templates and an updated Infrastructure Delivery Plan, with appropriate funding sources being identified perhaps from developer contributions?**
- 2) **Was the option of an unmanned barrier considered at Salisbury station northern entrance and will this possibility be explored in the future?**
- 3) **The summary Salisbury Transport Strategy made available in Nov 2012 lacks detail in respect of sustainable transport solutions. Does Wiltshire Council have plans to develop & consult on a Salisbury Transport Strategy which encompasses the needs of the city in terms of air quality improvements, pedestrianisation, public transport infrastructure & walking and cycling networks?**

**Response from Cllr Thomson
Cabinet member for Highways and Transport**

Question 1

With Salisbury Bus Station due to close on 4 January 2014, Wiltshire Council needs to make provision for the continuation of bus services in the city centre. The Council proposes to provide additional bus stops in Castle Street, Endless Street and Milford Street, with buses using Millstream Coach Park for laying over. These bus stops will be implemented as soon as possible to secure the continuation of services and to allow the local community to search for a more desirable bus interchange facility in the longer term. In this respect, the Council will provide technical support to the Area Board or City Council to identify a suitable alternative for a bus station.

In terms of coach parking, the ‘Salisbury Transport Reference Group Task Group 3’ recently met to discuss this issue and the Council will consider, with relevant partners, any proposals that come forward. There is scope for the city to retain its Coach Friendly status through alternative provision.

Question 2

Manned and unmanned barrier options at Salisbury Station’s northern entrance were considered as part of the initial development of a proposed Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) scheme. Unfortunately, there were difficulties working with key partners to progress the scheme including issues concerned with resourcing a manned or remotely monitored barrier. As a result, the LSTF Project Board decided to reallocate funds to

station enhancements at Trowbridge station to ensure that the available grant funding can be utilised before March 2015. Had the grant not been reallocated, there is the risk that the council would have had to hand it back.

Question 3

The summary made available in November 2012 was a short version of the more detailed Salisbury Transport Strategy papers that were consulted on as part of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy process. No further consultation is planned as the strategy has been adopted through the core strategy process. However, individual elements have been and/or will be consulted on (e.g. the Salisbury cycle network, the review of the Salisbury Air Quality Action Plan). Further pedestrianisation/shared spaces in the city centre is part of the remit of one of the current Vision working groups.