

INFRASTRUCTURE ADVISORY BOARD UPDATE REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 23rd October 2017

This update report provides members of the West of England Joint Committee with the views of the West of England Infrastructure Advisory Board in relation to agenda item 9 (West of England Joint Spatial Plan)

Agenda item 9

West of England Joint Spatial Plan

The Advisory Board received public statements from the following Members of the Public, the full statements are available the nature of the issues raised included:

David Redgewell, SWTN/TSSA and Bus Users UK

The lack of officers dealing with Greater Bristol infrastructure

- Highlighted the importance of MetroBus and MetroWest and
- The IAB should concentrate on delivering the next phase of sustainable projects, they are crucial as cannot deliver housing without sustainable travel.
- Support for the West of England Combined Authority to be appropriately resourced.

Colin Gardner, Thornbury Residents Against Poorly Planned Development

Joint Spatial Plan

- Trapped recognised the need for housing but are against poorly planned development
- Concerned that the views of residents and Town Councils are being ignored.
- Does not support the inclusion of Thornbury and Buckover in the JSP.

Helen Smith, VALID Group

Joint Spatial Plan

- Does not support the inclusion of Coalpit Heath in the JSP.
- Concerns raised re scale of development and poor transport infrastructure.

Christina Biggs, Suburban Bristol Railway (FOSBR)

Reaction to Joint Transport Study September 2017]

- Disappointed that the JSP document was not available earlier.
- Concern that Rail proposals were not being included in the JSP, for example Henbury Loop.

Robert Dixon, Suburban Bristol Railway (FOSBR)

Response to the West of England Transport Study

- Not able to attend- Christina Biggs on behalf of highlighted the need to consider further work on business case for the Henbury Loop.

Sophie Spencer, CPRE Avonside

- Supportive of combined approach
- Need consistent approach across 4UAs.
- Vital to look past housing numbers, differential between need and demand. Focus on meeting the need of truly affordable housing.

Cllr Claire Young, South Gloucestershire Council

- Concerns that there are over concentrations of development at a few locations in the JSP.
- Concerns that the JSP does not help those in priority neighbourhoods and does not protect existing sense of place
- Concerns regarding the potential of merging of settlements (Coalpit Heath, Yate, Thornbury and Buckover).

The views of the Infrastructure Advisory Board are set out in this report.

The Infrastructure Advisory Board Members commended officers for the work, time and effort that has gone into developing the West of England Joint Spatial Plan.

It was noted that:

- the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) was the first plan of its type and due to this central government would be carefully reviewing this process;
- it must be ensured that the infrastructure is in place before the outlined development is delivered;
- there is a need for schemes such as Metrobus to ensure the public are encouraged to consider more sustainable travel options;
- through the planning process we need to create a joint integrated approach to delivering infrastructure;
- funding needed to be made available prior to delivery;
- the need for new homes and affordable homes is key to the direct success of the region;
- through the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) we will need to address the issues of housing supply throughout the West of England;
- there is a need to have a strong stance on Affordable Housing and social housing, as key elements of the JSP. The government consider this to be a key element of planning and the JSP therefore must provide social housing for future generations;
- the definition of affordable housing needs to consider if it is affordable for local communities;
- affordable housing need was not being met across the West of England, due to viability issues. It was noted that together with infrastructure needs and

other aspects of quality to be addressed it may be difficult to address all priorities;

- views were expressed that stressed the need for Central Government to provide greater subsidies to help address issues of viability and delivering affordable housing;
- views were expressed that a change was needed for planning law to better ensure developers deliver within sensible timeframes. It was suggested that the authorities work with the development sector to address these challenges;
- councils are looking at how to accelerate delivery of homes on sites, again noting that viability is essential to delivery, and that work could be undertaken with development organisations;
- the business community were in support of the JSP and JTS outlining the need to include all components of place and infrastructure, which are essential to ensuring we make future places for housing and employment opportunities.
- the review process was outlined to be every 5 years; and
- more emphasis is needed on ensuring development is sustainable.

The Advisory Board supported progressing the plan but with regard to the following points:

- Careful consideration of the wording on the Affordable housing policy and reasoned justification text.
- The Advisory Board requested that the West of England authorities lobby government to review further powers to prioritise delivery of the JSP and to tackle the problems of viability, specifically the delivery of Affordable Housing and strategic infrastructure.

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