

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Strategy; Thompson, Graeme](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Taunton Transition Town - SW&T Local Plan Consultation
Date: 16 March 2020 13:39:20

Dear Sirs

I have this morning submitted a response to the local plan consultation on behalf of Taunton Transition Town, unfortunately on the 'connecting people' section where you asked for ideas for encouraging people out of their cars, we found the word limit frustratingly small! (Lots of people with lots of ideas and comments).

Please can the attached document be considered in addition to our submitted response to ensure the meaning of our very shortened response is understood.

Kind Regards
Tracy Samphier

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

5.6 Connecting People

6a How to encourage people not to use their cars + provide more opportunities for PT in rural areas

We found the wording limit for this section to be rather limiting so have expanded our response here to ensure the meaning is clear.

Roads/Cars:

Stop building new roads.

Hold a survey asking people why they come to town by car and what would/might persuade them to change to using the bus or cycling.

Promote car clubs and car sharing.

Cycling:

Prioritise spending on quality segregated cycle & walking infrastructure: e.g. Galmington Streams path – it is always in use by cyclists, pedestrians, school children and dog walkers – it is a major community asset and every community should have one or more.

Remove cobbles in Taunton town centre – they are horrible to cycle on and now full of broken / uneven stones.

Construct a Taunton to Wellington cycle path - quality & safely segregated from the road, but visible from the road so cyclists are seen from the queues (so everyone knows where it is and knows it isn't always a lot slower to cycle).

Promote electric bikes – the Government's own Propensity to cycle tool shows that if e-cycles become popular, the proportion of people cycling to work will increase significantly.

Parking:

Introduce a workplace parking levy (and out of town shop parking levy e.g. for shops with > 10 spaces). Use the money to fund improvements to bus services / cycle infrastructure.

Reduce car parking on new developments: 100 spaces for a few shops on new Comeytrowe development is excessive. Provide far more cycle parking.

Pedestrians:

Pedestrianize Taunton town centre (and others) but allow bikes & busses and provide LOTS of cycle parking.

NB: The assumption that closing streets to traffic increases congestion is one that is often quoted, but it's not necessarily correct. In fact, this study https://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/streets_people.pdf shows that congestion will usually increase to begin with but then will usually settle down. i.e. The findings of SACTRA appear to work in reverse, in that, if you take road space away from cars for other modes, people will change their behaviour and traffic will reduce: The document above is based on an EC study and is a very interesting read.

Public Transport:

Improve bus provision: Infrastructure and frequency. Improve bus stops (sheltered and flat seats) & provide real time bus information (app and website). Keep park & ride open for longer hours (eg for hospital staff).

Losing our bus station undermines the public transport system which we should be expanding. Need site assessment for new transport hub in Taunton with safeguarding policy to prevent future loss. Possibly near railway station possibly in town centre, for busses (all bus routes link to town & railway station) but include good quality cycle parking, cycle hire (including e-bikes), e-car hire, and other shared mobility services (would hire charges help to pay?) One of our members commented:

“Given the clear need for a public transportation hub that is fit for purpose into the 21st century and the need to decarbonise our economy and shift from a car-based economy to one that is based on walking, bikes, trains and yes, buses, couldn't a good case be made for the councils to buy the bus station and return it to public ownership, where surely it should have been in the first place? I am rather reminded of all Rob Hopkins pleas urging citizens and leaders alike to engage their imagination and start thinking more about "What if", rather than "What is" in the transition economy so badly needed at this crossroads.

So here is a challenge - what is there to stop the two Councils combined buying the bus station back into public ownership and reverse years of selling off public assets to acquiring them instead? I saw towns in Sweden, far smaller than Taunton, yet far better served by train and bus services. And crucially, with comfortable, safe, well-maintained, etc., bus terminals near the centre of town and naturally, well used by the citizens.”

Frequent central hopper bus linking town centre/bus hub/hospital/train stn.

Transport hub at Blackbrook for Falcon bus & coaches, link to P&R + town. Currently people waiting for the bus have a single timetable pinned to a lamppost and no shelter we shouldn't leave our bus customers waiting out in the rain! This is no welcome to Taunton! Secure cycle parking would be a great addition. Taxi rank for night time use. One of our members commented:

“The present arrangements at J25 are totally inadequate and pathetic in terms of passenger provision, especially for those people who use the Falcon bus service. No shelter from the elements and one tiny little bus timetable pinned to a lamp post, it is a pretty lousy introduction or last post for anyone leaving or arriving in Taunton by this route.

It urgently needs a bus shelter now, but going forward into the future, I too could imagine some kind of bus interchange with taxi and proper pick-up and drop off point being sited at Blackbrook, on the town side of J25 and not on the Henlade side at the Park and Ride, with also a secure bike park station built, so one could cycle there and safely leave a bike until one's return. At the moment there is nowhere to lock and leave a bike. In fact, no provision for bus passengers beyond what is mentioned above at all.

Making this location a convenient, comfortable, safe, secure public transport hub, also protected against the elements, would go a long way towards improving Taunton for public transport provision. All the more vital, now that the bus company has sold off the bus station in town, which doesn't augur well for future provision.”

Further information in TTT's Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Plan response.