

City of Winchester Movement Strategy

Report of meeting 1 December 2018



Almost 100 people squeezed into St Lawrence's Parish Room for an introduction to the City of Winchester Movement Strategy consultation, organised by the City of Winchester Trust and WinACC on 1 December 2018.

The aims were to understand what is in the proposed strategy and consultation, discuss, encourage responses and feed into the WinACC and Trust responses.

The meeting concluded that this was, indeed, an opportunity to change Winchester for the better. People generally welcomed the three priorities: Reduce City Centre Traffic; Support healthier lifestyles choices; and Support sustainable growth. They asked for more sense of urgency, and called on the Councils to act quickly to cut traffic and improve health.

This report explains the consultation, summarises the presentations, the discussion and points made by participants.

1. The consultation

Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council are looking to improve how people travel in and around Winchester. As the City grows and evolves, there is a need for an agreed strategy to ensure that the right travel and transport infrastructure is in place.

Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council are holding a public consultation to seek the views of residents, commuters, visitors, businesses and other stakeholders on the emerging City of Winchester Movement Strategy.

The Phase Two Consultation on the new City of Winchester Movement Strategy opened on 19 November and runs till 13 January 2019.

The strategy and consultation questionnaire, with background briefings, are at www.hants.gov.uk/winchestermovementstrategy

- The [Emerging Strategy Document](#)
- [Paper Response form](#)
- [Respond to the consultation online](#)

2. The Strategy's priorities

The priorities in the proposed strategy are:

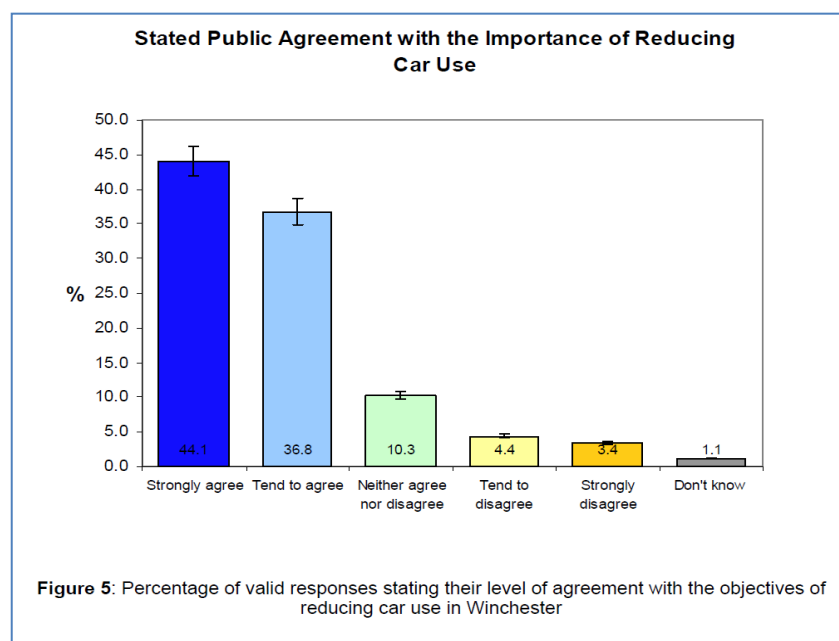
1. Reduce [Winchester] City Centre traffic
2. Support healthier lifestyle choices
3. Support sustainable growth.

The consultation concentrates on the strategic direction of the Strategy and seeks views on various measures to achieve these priorities.

3. Context

Phil Gagg - a member of both WinACC and the City of Winchester Trust - opened the meeting by reminding people of past support for reducing traffic in Winchester town centre.

In 2006, the European-funded Miracles study found that about 80% of people agreed that it was important for Hampshire County Council and Winchester City Council to reduce car use in Winchester and increase the number of journeys made by more sustainable methods, such as walking, cycling and public transport.



In 2010, "24 Hours to save Winchester..." proposed the concept "Walking within the walls". This led to a joint City of Winchester Trust and WinACC vision which included "A traffic-free (except for access) central area".

In 2016, the conference "Winchester: Thinking Ahead" organised by the BID, the City of Winchester Trust, the University of Winchester and WinACC decided that tackling traffic congestion was the top priority for the City.

In 2016- 2017, five polls of 1886 people in the town centre consistently found the most votes cast for restricting vehicle access and creating more pedestrian areas.

Local architects [Design Engine](#) kindly gave permission to show some of their ideas of what this could look like:

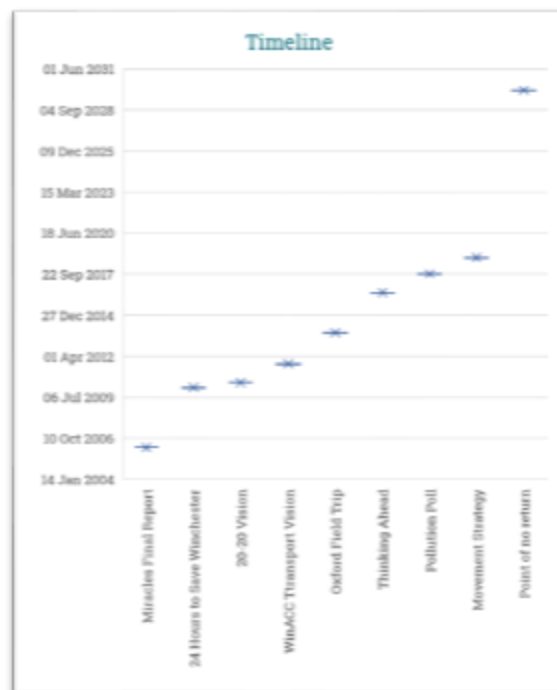
St George's St



Jewry St / High St/St George's St junction



Phil concluded by reminding people that it's taken 12 years to get to this draft strategy. We need to act fast – according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change¹, in another 11 years we get to the point of no return for climate change:



¹ https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/session48/pr_181008_P48_spm_en.pdf

4. The Strategy

Phil then summarised the HCC and WCC proposals. He welcomed many aspects of the document:

- solutions need to be bold.
- The vision and priorities.
- Reduction of traffic in the City Centre as the first and top priority, without which other changes will not be possible.
- Volume of traffic holds back the city centre.
- Bus priority measures and bus quality partnerships.
- Linking this strategy into the Local Plan.
- Links to air quality and health.
- Reference to transport plans and behaviour change.

He suggested some areas for improvement:

- Nothing on climate change – yet we have only 11 years left. The impacts of climate change are a big reason for effective speedy action.
- Park and Ride (3,000 new spaces) might be a short-term solution but a long-term embarrassment.
- Western Bypass and Easton Expressway not a good idea - an increase in traffic will impact the 2030 climate change targets.
- Short on walking and cycling improvements - he would like to see more work on how to remove barriers to walking and cycling.
- Nothing on improving rail access. It would be good to include proposals for developing rail services so people can use trains instead of the car, especially from the Solent area.
- Current major projects such as Central Winchester Regeneration, the Station Quarter and Winchester Sport and Leisure Centre are listed but he would like to see more analysis of threats and possibilities for the Movement Strategy.
- We need Zero-Carbon, not “Sustainable”, Growth The term “sustainable growth” could be seen as “financially sustainable growth” which could apply to schemes that increase emissions / car use.

5. Facts and clarifications

The consultation gives some surprising and interesting facts. For example, through traffic (in other words, that which starts and ends its journey outside town) is only 7% of the total. So we could achieve a major reduction by concentrating on the 93%.

WCC plans to review its car parking strategy in 2019. There used to be policy that car park places in town would be reduced as new parking was created in park-and-ride but this policy was lost when the current [Local Plan was approved in April 2017](#)

A “high quality bus partnership” would give more strategic power over bus provision to HCC.

A “bus gate” isn’t a gate – it’s a route that only buses can go through. Here’s an example from Oxford:



6. Views of people at the meeting

People at the meeting made these points in discussion, or in writing to the organisers at the close of the meeting. Points are grouped as far as possible under the Strategy’s priorities and measures.

6.1 Overall

- Isn't bold enough.
- It feels far too timid. A bigger aim to work towards would have been good, e.g. private car free city!
- Surprised how timid it is.
- Needs more urgency.
- Need a quicker time-frame.
- Local people have been arguing for traffic reduction for the last 40 years, not just since 2006.

- Why has nothing happened? Councillors need to understand that people want change.
- The critical point is timescale. Will this initiative fail like all its predecessors? Action must happen soon. We need ... realistic proposals that might actually come to pass.
- This is going the right way, so it's important to support it even if you also say that you want more done, and more quickly.
- The proposals for major developments – especially Sports and Leisure Centre at Bar End – don't reflect the priorities of the Movement Strategy. The Bar End proposals are inadequate for walking, cycling and bus. The Station Approach is another example – WCC should not permit any more car parking there.
- What it left out is as important as what is in it.

6.2 Reduce [Winchester] City Centre traffic

Increasing the capacity of Park-and-Ride

- Park-and-Ride is needed for people who work or study in central Winchester and cannot afford to live in Winchester or to pay high bus fares and train fares
- Having more Park-and-Ride won't necessarily reduce traffic in town centre by itself, without other measures – it didn't in the past.

Introducing measures to help manage traffic demand such as travel plans, changing car parking

- Increase price of car parks in the town centre.
- Change car park cost differential - inside city vs Park-and-Ride.
- WCC should build on its car parks, and use the money to pay for buses, walking routes etc.
- There's a lot of private non-domestic parking for offices, hotels, even the Cathedral. WCC should use its planning powers to have no car parking in new developments.
- City and County to reduce private car parking.
- WCC and HCC need to walk the walk as well as talk the talk – no parking in new WCC development schemes.
- People with disabilities would be able to park more easily if other parking wasn't permitted.
- All city centre car parks only for disabled – with enforcement (e.g. if Blue Badges are lent to friends).

- The population is increasing – and the growth is of people who are 80+ and young people, neither of whom are drivers.
- Average car occupancy in Winchester is 1.25 people per car. How can we encourage car-sharing?
- Central traffic: stop traffic in city between certain times e.g. 9-5 pm. Permit deliveries etc. before these times and after e.g. by 8am and after 6 pm.
- Control traffic movement by number plate priority per day, alternat[ing].
- Need carrot not stick approach to reducing car use. Penalising people via congestion charges and building on car parks is the wrong approach; better bus services to villages would help.
- Ensure it's not just about cars. There must be viable / affordable alternative to cars. That works for all the different stake-holder groups.
- Enforcement will be essential.

Introducing bus priority on key routes into the City Centre; Negotiating a new bus partnership with bus operators across the City

- 13% of traffic starts in one suburb and drives to another. These journeys could be made by bus.
- Why close off Southgate and Chesil streets by bus gates? There will be more pollution and traffic miles as drivers find longer different route.
- The bus gates are a good idea but don't go far enough. – e.g. the Chesil St gate would help reduce cross-city traffic to the proposed Bar End Leisure centre but won't stop (e.g.) Highcliffe residents using rat runs via Quarry Rd and Alresford Rd or Winnall Manor Rd.
- The latest Euro 6 bus has the same emissions as 1 car, and uses the same energy as 6 cars.
- How to improve public transport: reduce costs; improve circulation; encourage use.
- People who live in villages without a bus can't manage without a car – but most people come into Winchester from Solent / market towns which have bus or train.
- Buses must have priority over cars.

6.3 Support healthier lifestyle choices

Re-allocating road space to walking & cycling

- Design Engine's images of a car-free Winchester might help encourage people to change the mind-set that they need to drive everywhere – let's publicise them.
- Improve walk and cycle ways immediately.

- Implement some simple cheaper solutions first, to encourage walking and cycling
- What we can do immediately closing off roads e.g. Chesil St at weekends for use by buses, Park-and-Ride, special car groups, in order to test effects.
- Safe pavements. Safe routes for cyclists.
- Shut Winchester to cars once a month, to show what it's like.
- Experimental street closures over weekends
- Would have liked time for discussion on planning for traffic in city centre in view of pedestrianisation. What happens to small streets like Hyde St?
- No serious investment in walking & cycling [in strategy].

A charging zone for car commuters and all diesel vehicles

What sort of charging zone? – air quality? Congestion? Workplace levy? Other?

- Make private non-domestic car parks pay a Workplace Levy
- Restrict cars in the city centre to zero-carbon vehicles only

6.4 Support sustainable growth.

An integrated approach to transport planning and land-use planning

Enhancing the public realm

Better management of goods deliveries

Enhancing strategic road network capacity

- A western by-pass might reduce through traffic and take pressure off Winchester and M3 jnctn 9, especially when latter closed by accidents.
- No - more roads mean more cars.

6.5 Publicising the consultation

- Everyone should share on their Facebook page / twitter account, and tell their friends
- Link anything you say about it to the fact that the world is on the edge of a precipice – we have 12 years to act.
- Leaflets and the strategy can be found at libraries and HCC and WCC reception
- HCC/WCC should be doing more to inform people about the proposals – meetings, or just exhibitions as WCC has done for its developments at Bar End, central Winchester etc.
- Much more publicity needed. Most people in Winchester do not know what is going on. Banner?

- More publicity needed.
- We need to publicise the strategy and possibility of feedback. Use table at the entrance of Discovery Centre with a banner/poster and copies of strategy. Take comments there and then. Put a banner in the High St.
- More input from Hampshire Chronicle – serious articles as well as headlines.
- A briefing would be helpful – on WinACC / the City of Winchester Trust website please
- It would be useful to list which people would be entitled to use a car even if there was a car free town centre, such as people with disabilities and carers. so that people could see who would be affected
- You need to change hearts and minds. Awareness of the issue is very important.
- 1000 characters on consultation website = 100 words – can pressure be put on them to alter this for proper consultation?
- Could HCC put a no-colour more easily printable version on its website?

6.6 Miscellaneous

- Winchester needs more low cost housing so that people in lower paid jobs don't need to commute into town to work.
- Winchester needs to work hand-in-hand with neighbouring authorities including Southampton to get a co-ordinated approach to air pollution, traffic reduction, bus routes etc.
- Need to understand costs of implementing initiatives.
- Cost of traffic surveys [illegible] so should use to set out long term aims and plans even if can only get money for first stage. Do the majority of BID members oppose a congestion charge (despite what was quoted in the Hampshire Chronicle)?
- The future will see more electric cars, and more people hiring a car / using a car club instead of owning their own.
- Someone asked about electric charing points in Winchester. See <https://www.zap-map.com/locations/winchester-charging-points/>

7. Next steps

Everyone is encouraged to respond to the consultation themselves.

- [Paper Response form](#)
- [Respond to the consultation online](#)

WinACC intends to publish its draft response on its website in the week beginning 17 December, inviting comments by 3 January in time for WinACC to amend it and submit by the 13 Jan deadline.

The City of Winchester Trust is also considering its response.

This report from the meeting was to be sent to all present as quickly as possible.