

Scotforth Parish Council
Annual Report 2017-2018
May 2018

It has been another very quiet year. There were no major issues other than commenting on the Local Plan. The routine issues considered during meetings covered:

1. Receipt of road and drainage defect reports from Parish members, forwarding the information to the Highways Agency and then monitoring them to completion
2. Commenting on planning applications being made within the Parish

The Local Plan

1. The Parish Council submitted an objection to the proposed Garden Village within the parish. Our submission based on potential traffic problems is given below:

The key problem associated with the Garden Village proposal is its planned size and the consequent effect on local transport. This is clearly recognised in Para 12.11 which states “Transport and the movement of vehicles and people are key to the development within the Garden Village and beyond”. Access to the city from the proposed development is primarily via the A6 or Ashton Road (subject to a railway bridge to the A6 being constructed). Access to Morecambe is through the city centre onto a bridge crossing over the River Lune. Both the A6 and Ashton Road meet at the pointer roundabout to the south of the city where significant queues already form at peak times. The increased traffic arising out of a development of this size will significantly increase traffic levels and make the queues worse. This will seriously impact on the viability of one of the proposed transport solutions, the Bus Rapid Transit System referred to in Para 12.19. Para 12.19. To make the

proposed “Bus Rapid Transit System” work would require dedicated bus lanes to “by-pass” the traffic queues at the Pointer Island. The A6 and Ashton Road are not wide and there are several very narrow sections on both roads that preclude the construction of a dedicated bus lane preventing a Bus Rapid Transit System from working making this DPD proposal unsound.

2. A “Cycling and Walking Superhighway” is proposed as another arm of the transport solution but again this is not practicable. There already exists a dedicated cycleway and footpath between the University and the city but that is by no means a superhighway, nor does it lend itself to becoming one as it runs for the most part on the existing road network without any segregation from motor vehicles. The only part that could qualify is the final part of the route through the Burrow Beck linear park which has a dedicated route for cyclists and pedestrians but even that uses Bailrigg Lane to complete the link. The road network component runs along existing roads which have several “T” junctions along their length and there is a particularly hazardous one from the University pathway onto Bailrigg Lane. To claim the presence of a cycling and walking superhighway as a transport solution would require a dedicated route away from vehicles along the whole length which not only be difficult to find but would also be very costly. The DPD is again unsound for this reason.
3. Proposed development to the East of the M6. Construction of dwellings to the east of the M6 as part of the Garden Village has its own problems:
 - Development would not be acceptable in the vicinity of the large wind turbine due to its associated noise and stroboscopic shadows
 - Siting large numbers of houses immediately to the east of the M6 will result in properties suffering serious traffic pollution as the prevailing wind comes from the south west until traffic pollution is drastically reduced which will not be before the end of the plan period.
 - There will be significant increases in traffic along Hazelrigg Lane and the connected minor roads which are all “typical” country lanes with foundations for only light traffic volumes. The edges are not “properly” constructed and there would be significant

costs involved in upgrading these roads. These aspects are not mentioned in the DPD making it incomplete.

- If the development extended to the east of the M6, road safety would become a more significant issue with the increased traffic volumes in addition to the existing “rat run traffic” on the country lanes. There would need to be speed restrictions below the current 60 mph speed limit which the Parish Council have requested in the past but been rejected on the grounds that the roads do not qualify for a speed reduction under current legislation.

Para 12.24 states that there is still much work to be done to this DPD with completion of the work is not expected until 2020. In view of the large number of technical and funding issues surrounding the proposed Garden Village at its planned size combined with and the associated infrastructure changes needed to make it viable, the Parish Council recommends that it should either be taken out of the DPD until, the assessment works are completed or its size be significantly reduced.