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Comment ID 13722017/1

Respondent [Bristol Food Policy Council \(D...](#)

Response Date 06 Jan 2019

Comment **This Comment is submitted by Bristol Food Policy Council and relates to WED 008 and WED 007.** Bristol Food Policy Council objects to the selection of the Sims Hill site for a proposed Park and Ride. We request that a comprehensive option appraisal be conducted to identify and fully assess all potential sites for Park and Ride that could serve the M32 transport route. A wider range and number of sites need to be considered, and the benefits and limitations need to be more fully weighed up in accordance with the stated aims of the Transport Strategy (reduced carbon emissions, support economic growth, promote accessibility, contribute to better safety security and health, improve quality of life and a healthy natural environment).

There is evidence that the benefits now and in the future of the agricultural land at and around Sims Hill are considerable, and that these benefits are already, and will increasingly in the future, contribute to each of the five stated aims for the Transport Strategy (listed above). Therefore the assessment of the optimum site for the Park and Ride must take account of the fulfilment of these common aims by food-related projects, existing and future. We support the need for Park and Ride, and believe that it is counterproductive to sacrifice land that is helping to meet low carbon, better health and better environment aims, in order to provide an amenity aimed at low carbon, better health and better environment aims.

The community-owned Sims Hill Shared Harvest market garden, set up on this land in 2010, is already nationally renowned. Short, low-carbon, local supply chains for staple foods together with visible and inclusive community food growing are becoming widely recognised as essential for

human health, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and for biodiversity. These aims form part of the Bristol's commitment as signatory to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, Bristol's application for gold status under the Sustainable Food Cities Award, and form part of Bristol's Environmental Strategy linked to the Mayor's One City Plan. The role and amenity of the 'Blue Finger' corridor of high quality agricultural land will become increasingly important over coming decades. Unless these factors are taken fully into account then the Transport Strategy is failing in the requirement to be 'Justified'.

The ways in which the Transport Strategy aims are met by the preservation of best quality agricultural land include;

- ▶ farming practices that sequester carbon, short local supply chains that reduce polluting and congestion-causing HGV trips, as well as reducing need for carbon intensive refrigeration and warehousing, and supply chains that are less wasteful of food and use very little packaging.
- ▶ local economic activity that creates jobs, trains growers for the future, and keeps money in the local economy.
- ▶ accessibility for health and employment through apprenticeships, work experience, and creation of community projects that offer safe and inclusive learning spaces.
- ▶ improve health through more people able to eat fresh cook-from-scratch produce, more people engaged in healthy activity in the natural world, more connection, less loneliness.
- ▶ improve quality of life for everyone involved in these projects, and enhanced natural environment by nature-friendly farming practices that reduce pesticide and fertiliser use, and lead to increased soil health, invertebrate populations, small mammals, farmland birds, and insects including pollinator bees and butterfly populations.

The draft Bristol Local Plan recognises the special amenity for the area of land that includes Sims Hill (6.2.4, 6.2.5, RES 5) and intends to protect this for its special importance for food

growing and community use. It is a requirement for the JSP that it be consistent with Local Plans for constituent authorities.

These issues were highlighted by the Bristol Food Policy Council in our March 2015 comments (attached) submitted as part of the pre-commencement process. Since 2015 the awareness and urgency of the need to reduce carbon in our food system has increased.

Attachments  FPC precommencement JSPS comments MArch 2015.docx
(180 KB)