

The transport and movement policy sounds very positive as a whole, aspirational even. I welcome the goals to reduce car ownership levels, improve wheeling, cycling, and walking facilities and infrastructure, and provide better links with nearby urban and suburban centres. I am slightly concerned, however, that unfettered growth, both in terms of the port itself and of the people and goods trips contributing to this, will result in greater use of the private vehicle. This is highly likely to occur if the plan is set on “increasing the capacity of the main road network to the city and Port where necessary through targeted measures” (**policy item 5b**).

The proposed re-building of the Northam Rail bridge is welcome but will only encourage active travel if well designed. The demonstrated tendency to build parts of cycle lanes where it is easy to do so and where it provides minimal disruption to vehicular traffic at current levels, and avoid doing so where it is difficult physically, or takes space away from vehicular traffic, results in under-utilisation. It is counter-productive to provide incomplete cycle routes. After having a short part of their journey on a dedicated cycle lane, cyclists get thrust into the paths of pedestrians or traffic at inopportune moments (the avenue cycle lanes are an excellent example of this ill-considered, half-completed attempt at cycling infrastructure). Not only is this unpleasant for the cyclist, and potentially dangerous, it is also frustrating for pedestrians and for drivers, contributing to conflict and the all too common “us vs. them” mentality. The statement that there are 53 miles of cycle routes in Southampton is meaningless unless they are 53 joined-up, consecutive miles. **A route is only as good as its least developed section, and at the moment there are few (if any) complete routes between urban or suburban centres. I hope this is considered; it is not discussed in the plan.**

Park and ride services are long overdue in Southampton, and I am hopeful that these materialise in a fully functioning manner. To claim the Adanac site as a functional park and ride service is disingenuous; it is a private offering for NHS workers, it is not part of the public transport system. Removing parking in the centre and relocating to the periphery is welcome, but public transport should be the priority. Although there is much said about improving public transport in the policy, there is nothing said of the cost. Fuel duty has been frozen since 2011, effectively subsidising private car use. Similar policy tools should be in place to incentivise public transport use. **Cost is consistently cited as a reason for low rates of public transport ridership. The issue is conspicuous in its absence from the travel plan.**

I also welcome plans to remove West Quay road but would go further to remove parts of Platform Road at the southern end of the High street. This completely severs the city centre and old town from the waterfront. No area is welcoming when it has a major road bisecting it, and any investment in that part of the waterfront will essentially be wasted with that road remaining in place. This section has significant historical and cultural importance and already has green space that has enormous potential yet is currently under-utilised (i.e., Mayflower Park).

The liveability of a place is inextricably linked with its transport system, in terms of infrastructure and services. The positioning and wording of the policy seems to recognise this and put emphasis on walking and cycling, and on use of public transport. I hope this emphasis will also be seen when it comes to implementation; however, there needs to be some acceptance that motorised traffic will be impacted. It needs to be easier for people to get around without the car and accept that it will be more difficult to get around in the car (for most – use of this mode should be protected for those who really need it). I hope the difficult decisions will not, as often seems to be the case, be taken in the favour of the vocal motorist groups to the detriment of the city (and society) as a whole.

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