WinACC on the Station Approach Design Brief

My concern is simple, to urge that low carbon should be an explicit part of the design brief for the Station Approach.

WinACC warmly welcomed Cabinet's decision in June of last year to adopt the Route Map for a Low Carbon Economy, and to commit the City Council to low carbon leadership. Less than six months ago, you approved the report Working Towards a Low Carbon District, agreeing that the Council would demonstrate its low carbon leadership by actively encouraging residents, businesses and other organisations to play their part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to meet the targets you adopted then.

You will understand therefore our disappointment that the authors of the report on the Station Approach, and in particular the brief for the design competition, did not mention these clear Council policy positions. The report before you has no reference to the need to reduce carbon emissions. I am here this evening to ask you to rectify that oversight.

This isn't just a theoretical point - it has serious implications for the whole future of the area because (as the report rightly says in paragraph 4.3), only the criteria set out in the tender document can be used in judging the competition. So unless low carbon is a criterion, sustainability cannot be a consideration.

All that is needed are three small changes in the wording.

First: to add one more principle to the list "Principles for Determining a Successful Development Outcome" set out on page 11 of the draft Design Brief in appendix 1 – "contribute to a lower carbon and sustainable Winchester".

Second: to add an additional bullet point to the Executive summary on page 3, under the heading "The completion of a successful project", to read "contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, in order to enable Winchester District to do its share to meet nationally binding targets".

And third: to amend the first paragraph of page 4, to read "the development should have a positive impact on the economy ***and environment*** of the city as a whole". You will know there is no conflict between economic vitality and carbon reduction. Quite the opposite. Evidence shows that lower carbon forms of transport improve the economic vitality of towns and shops.

We urge you to make these changes which we are confident will have the support of the vast majority of people in Winchester City and the surrounding District.

Just in conclusion may ask you not to be distracted by the inclusion of "air quality" in the brief. This is an important point, but it is very different from the overarching issue of the impact of the new development on climate change and the carbon footprint of Winchester District.

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