

Dear Councillor

Time is running out to get A264 junctions right for walking and cycling

The five massive new junctions planned to accommodate the North Horsham development have no separate crossings for people walking and cycling.

Even before the planned extra housing, the A264 carries 45,000 vehicles a day – that's roughly 1 per second. Yet at the largest of these junctions on Rusper Road, children walking to school will have to cross a dozen lanes of this traffic in up to five separate stages.

Amazingly, the developers say that *not* installing proper crossings is "*more attractive to pedestrians and cyclists*"!

As a fall-back they have provided some sketchy bridge designs, but these are very poor. They prioritise cars and force people to take long diversions, making them climb unnecessarily: an 11metre climb takes you well above the roof tops.

Far better designs are needed. Practical, affordable solutions exist, but they need to be an integral part of the design – they cannot be 'tacked on' afterwards.

This is not an issue of lack of funding: tens of millions of pounds are being spent on the new roads and the infrastructure budgets have been adapted as plans have progressed. Just a tiny fraction of this money could create first-class cycling infrastructure that genuinely gives people a choice of how to travel.

Enabling more people to cycle will have a strong benefit/cost ratio for the whole of Horsham District by improving health, reducing congestion, improving access to work, education and leisure and supporting local shops and businesses. The need for this is backed by a clear legal requirement under NPPF to prioritise cycling and also by Government policy and local WSCC and HDC policies.

Developers' plans make much of the benefits of North of Horsham for sustainable travel, but when you drill down into the detail, there is nothing there for cycling. There is not even a plan to make use of the existing railway underpass to safely complete the Horsham-Crawley cycle route.

There has been a complete failure to prioritise or even to consider cycling as a valid means of transport. There has been no public consultation on the crossings and none is planned. The latest designs are not publicly available.

LTP3 says WSCC will "*work with ... cycle forums to identify local priorities and assist with infrastructure design and programme delivery*" and "*Effective partnerships ...will be crucial to the successful delivery of the strategy*" yet it has replied to the Horsham District Cycling Forum saying that there is no need to even engage in discussion until after the HDPF is adopted.

By that stage, it will be far too late. Horsham's future depends on acting now.

Yours faithfully

Ruth Fletcher

Horsham District Cycling Forum –Working to make cycling a safe, convenient and attractive option