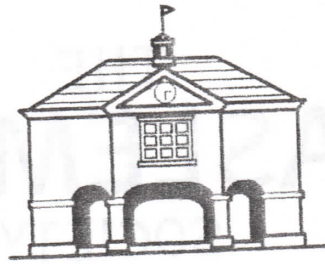


THE HASLEMERE SOCIETY



29th June 2016

Mr S D Smith
Design Manager
South Western Railway
Basingstoke Campus
Greeley Road
Basingstoke RG214FS

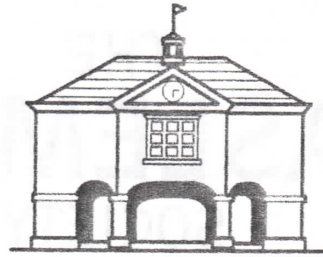
Dear Mr S D Smith,

Haslemere Railway Station Car Park

Haslemere Society representatives attended a meeting held at the Georgian Hotel Haslemere on the 14th June 2016; the purpose of this was not for consultation. The result was that the Haslemere Society and majority attending left the meeting with grave concerns as to the proposals. It appeared that you were informing us what was happening with contracts having been already let by yourselves.

There were fundamental design flaws with a general uneasiness within the audience that those designing had not fully understood what currently happens on site with the traffic flows at critical times during the day. No assurance had been given that your employees were fully aware and indeed had visited during peak times. The audience perception was that the designers had relied heavily on computer modelling to assist them. This is only as good as the input of information that is entered into the model.

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Listed below is a summary of the problem areas.

Restrictions with the proposed car park exit proposal will cause maneuvering problems for buses. The inability to turn right out of the east side of the station for traffic wanting to go to destinations west and south. In particular this may result in buses having to go all along Lower Street, around the tight Town Hall and back again and adding to congestion. Many buses used at weekends during line maintenance turn right out of the east side needing a wide sweep.

Bus arrivals and departures are minor compared to car arrivals and departures due to the very limited bus services in Haslemere and therefore greater provision for cars is essential. Train users live in a very wide geographical area some commute as far away as Chichester. Buses can utilise the Lower Street bus bay. The proposal to include the bus stop that is currently sited near the hotel within the station drop off & pick up area will add to the congestion in this area.

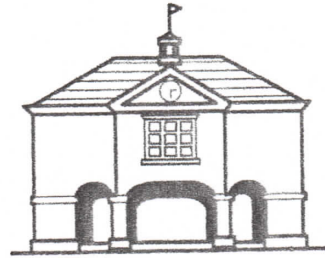
There was no evidence presented at the meeting that assured us that your designers had witnessed the very large numbers of cars using the station forecourt at 7-00 to 9-00am, school time 3-30 to 5-00pm and the following evening time until 8-00pm. Space for waiting cars and for delayed train arrivals is necessary.

The exit to the drop & pick up zone appeared to be restricted to a single lane. Currently, traffic can exit by turning left and right which frees up the forecourt more readily. Restricting the exit to single lane will result in gridlock with cars wanting to turn right into the drop & pick up zone and cause an inability for traffic to enter due to forecourt congestion.

The planned motor cycle parking area near the entrance to the drop off & pick up zone appears to occupy significant space and add further restriction to this area. There is a proposal to have motor cycle parking within the new car park area as well. Too much space may have been allocated to provide for motor cycles. Would it be possible for motor cycles to be included within the cycle shed in the Western car park to free up the the drop & pick up zone?

Your cycle provision might be an overkill as only a small proportion of train users will want to cycle because the roads from the station are very narrow and busy and thus too dangerous for cycling as well as Haslemere being a very hilly area. There is no inducement to cycle in a city suit with a brief case and especially in wet weather and thus the necessity to use the car to and from the station.

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We understand that the foundations and columns for the new parking deck are designed to carry further additional decks and could you confirm how many, as the single new deck will not accommodate all the street parked cars? When additional car parking decks are added, what height structure is ultimately intended?

Haslemere Society is particularly interested in the landscaping detail. It was explained that a significant budget was available for this purpose. What works are intended to replace the trees and bushes screening the car park that were removed ?

In conclusion significant issues are raised which need resolving before works progress to the stage when there is no room to refine matters. It is a pity that your proposals were not made public in good time prior to the recent meeting as interested parties could have assisted in getting these matters resolved from the outset. You should quickly re appraise the design and let us and other interested Haslemere Parties see the revised scheme.

Yours faithfully

Handwritten signature of M D O Neil.

M D O Neil

Haslemere Society Committee Member
(Station Liaison)

Copies to: Haslemere Town Council; Martin Odell Local Rail Users Representative.