

Petersfield Transport Study Feedback



General Comments

The draft study looks sensible and based on criteria likely to give a reasoned basis for future traffic planning for the centre of Petersfield. Most of the conclusions and recommendations for future work are well-argued, although I fear that the sheer amount of recommended further study may well act to inhibit doing anything at all to introduce improvements.

[Whilst informal discussions have already been held, and HCC is supportive of the content of the study, it is suggested that PTC seek a formal view from Hampshire County Council as to the minimum evidence they would require to progress to delivery. This will set the scope for further study work.](#)

It is not immediately easy to compile any comments of great significance since the draft contains either generic information (some of which is duplicated) or results of 'statistics' from surveys in general from which we can neither question nor compare.

That said, it is comprehensive and interesting document and provides an ideal evidence based snapshot which I hope, given the investment, can be considered as 'in date' for many years to come. Years we will all need at Town, District and County level to be able to deliver best recommendations and implementing alterations to the Town. It is vital that PTC through its TDC continue to maintain this as a living issue rather than end up on a shelf!

[Traffic survey results are normally considered valid for around two years.](#)

Most of the comments below are probably rather more for us rather than to the authors of the Draft Report. Given this, and the

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possibility that there could be pages of comments from possibly 12 (!), I would recommend that assistance will be needed to drill down and consider only those most relevant and any main obvious trends.

A PowerPoint presentation will be prepared for the Town Development Meeting on 7th September – this presentation file can be shared with PTC as a useful and user friendly summary of the key findings.

The study appears both extensive and well researched. I particularly appreciated the sections relating to cycling which have surely been written by a cyclist.

Comments on the Draft

Car Parking in Town Centre (Page 8) – It was bit of surprise but good to hear that Town Car parks were sufficient for all to park who might normally park in the Town Centre. The survey, however, would not consider people behaviour or parking within near residential areas so in theory the problem will continue.

Parking in residential areas, where controlled parking zones are already in place, was outside of the scope of this report, but could be investigated through further study work if required.

Good to see our own views on second decking is highlighted and supported. Thus the shared space concept is considered viable. However shared space, I believe, is not just about parking.

Access to Cars by Ward (Page 9) - It is hoped that the forthcoming changes to Boundaries will not negate the thrust of this statistic.

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Vision for the Brief and Traffic Flow Survey (Page 14) – The draft does capture our ultimate aims well. One area of concern maybe getting accurate details in Section 8 in the summary of personal injury as will only contain details of reported cases and not taking into account the near misses. Thus any statistic produced is likely to be or could be challenged but as ever without evidence.

STATS19 Police data is the most robust data source available for details on casualties and covers all injury collisions reported to the Police. It will not include near misses, however, recently Hampshire Constabulary has launched an online tool to report traffic incidents – it includes an option to report a “close pass” if the first vehicle is a cycle and the second a motor vehicle.

Traffic Analysis (Page 25) - Interesting way of collecting data by use of mobile phones. Accept that most people now have mobiles but many of our older generation (apparently of which we have our fair share) do not. Thus we may not get 100% accurate information so we will need to accept some wriggle room. That said I did take an individual and focussed look at the area in which I live concerning speed and have long term perception of the situation and the data illustrated comes well in line. A copy of this report should be forwarded to Royal Mail in particular!

Whilst it is recognised that not all car drivers will have suitable mobile phones to enable this data to be collected, as the data relates to speed, as opposed to volume, it is considered that the sample of mobile phone users will be suitable to provide a good picture of traffic congestion.

Community Transport (Page 30) – There is a current HCC consultation out on all public subsisted transport which may need to

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be taken in account prior to accepting an analysis. If this survey is a snapshot only then I refer to previous comments that it may not survive contact with any implementation phase and would need to be reviewed.

It should be noted that HCC has recently held a consultation on the future of subsided public transport services. Subsided services in Petersfield include the 38 Alton to Petersfield, 71 Froxfield to Petersfield and 94 Buriton to Petersfield. These services will form part of an upcoming review which will seek to make savings through changes to financial support for services of this type across the County.

Rat Running to avoid Rail Barrier Down (Page 32) – I fully support the additional need for a ‘turning assessment’ in the Frenchman’s Road Area.

A proposal can be prepared for you on request.

Response to Requests for Feedback (Page 35) – It was good to see such organisations as The Petersfield Society responding but equally disappointing that many organisations did not, (given the amount of whinging we get!)

2011 Census Stats (Page 36) – Accept this is probably the best source of information however given that there is 10 years between census’ and further delays while the information is processed may be a further cause for review. We have considerable development planned.

This is the most comprehensive data source and a mainstay of evidence for transport studies.

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Highway Authority (Page 42) – Can we confirm that the fairly recent delegation of some highways functions from HCC to EHDC will not lead to misleading information. This may, however, be expressed and addressed on Page 44/45.

Hampshire Services liaised with both HCC and EHDC in collecting data on traffic regulation orders to ensure the most current data was presented.

Business Response to Parking/ Deliveries (Page 46) – Disappointed to hear of such a low response %. Would have thought a key issue in Business Management either individually or in support of fellow businesses – rarely does a business set up in isolation, other successful businesses lead to visitors to the Town and all can thus benefit.

A response rate of between 30-55% is considered to be good.

Resident Discount on Parking Season Tickets (Page 53) – I have to confess to failing to understand the rationale behind penalising these residents. If my understanding is correct which it might not be then I strongly disagree. The whole Local Parking section here needs discussion as it also seems to contradict previous comments about capacity. It maybe that I have taken out of context.

This is just reporting on current East Hants policy and is not a recommendation of the report

PTC Owned Car Parks (Page 66) – These recommendations do not come at any surprise and indeed have been discussed within PTC probably for years. However, easier said than done with the need to provide for hire uses, visits to green areas and indeed the added

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need for enforcement. In addition and to some extent we are as a Council morally obligated here to 'provide'.

It is suggested that different uses of these car parks could be managed through a permit scheme, or a barrier on site with a code provided to private hire groups.

Through Traffic (Page 92) – The high % of through traffic is quite a find for me and in order to reduce this if this has been considered as necessary impacts on any ring routes around the Town. I suspect it will be questioned by business however as their perception is likely to promote as much passing traffic as possible despite the occupants not stopping to make purchases.

Through traffic was measured from the junction of Charles Street/Lavant Street to High Street (close to the junction with Dragon Street/College Street) so it is possible that drivers entering from other routes e.g. St. Peter's Road or Sheep Street, or exiting via Swan Street made short stops in the town centre. However, it is felt that the data collected provides a reasonable estimation.

Moreover, some studies indicate that businesses tend to overestimate the number of customers who use on-street parking. The two studies below undertaken by national walking and cycling organisations provide more detail:

<http://www.tut.fi/verne/wp-content/uploads/Shoppers-and-how-they-travel.pdf>

https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/1391/pedestrianpound_full-report_web.pdf

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Specifics

The order of these comments is not intended to imply any relative importance or priority.

Rail Station Car Parks

It is very clear from the surveys that the car parks at the Station are used to capacity during working hours from Monday to Friday. While there may be space available at weekends, this is not a good premise on which to include the car parks in any assessment of available space in Petersfield, and I suggest that they be discounted for the purposes of this exercise.

Whilst the train station car parking could be removed from the figures, it is underused at the weekends and provides a good opportunity for accommodating parking in the town centre. Supplementary signage could be installed on key routes in order to highlight this parking availability for weekend use.

Providing increased car parking in other areas of the town centre, when this space is underutilised, could be costly and reduce space available for other town centre land use activities.

It follows that there should not be signposts on Winchester Road directing vehicles to the Station Car Park (page 54 para 9.1), since this would lead to frustration and increased traffic build-up around car parks that were already full.

As above, supplementary signage could be installed on key routes in order to highlight this parking availability for weekend use.

Page 31 para 4.4. The report suggests that more could be done to advertise onward bus services from the station to key tourist

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destinations such as QE Country Park. The report also states that “there are currently no bus services on Sunday”. Since QE Country Park is likely to be most popular at the weekend, we would need to be careful about advertising the availability of bus services.

Page 61. The report suggests that, as an interim measure to help alleviate some of the parking difficulties, we should encourage those who live locally to make their way to the station by means other than a private car. That’s a very worthy sentiment, but needs to be backed up by practical suggestions of ways to make it happen, otherwise it has little meaning. I suspect that the only means of encouraging would be by using stick rather than carrot, which is unlikely to impress the local population.

The report includes some options. In addition demand responsive public transport could be investigated, along with improvements to cycle routes towards the station. A Station Travel Plan could be developed with local users and the Community Rail Partnership. This section of the report has been updated to reflect these further opportunities.

Cycling

The study showed that levels of cycling in Petersfield were generally higher at weekends than during the week. This suggests that cycling tends to be done more for leisure than as a means of getting to work.

Even so, I was surprised to read (page 82) that “under 65s contributed least to cycling numbers, at just 6%.” Does that mean that 94% of cyclists are over 65? I could find no evidence on the appendices to support that.

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This section should read “over 65s” – the report has been amended to correct this error.

Festival Hall Car Park

I am in favour of the idea of creating access onto the Festival Hall car park from Tor Way. But we would need to be careful about the positioning and design of any exit onto Tor Way, as it could potentially be difficult or hazardous to exit in order to head north.

[Hampshire Services can be commissioned to undertake these types of studies and, where a suitable scheme is identified, deliver through Section 278 agreements.](#)

Deliveries

Personal experience suggests that one of the main causes of traffic build-up and congestion during the daytime is the presence of significant numbers of delivery trucks of all sizes unloading in Spine locations. The report identifies the problem, but does little to suggest solutions. Without a solution that radically reduces the number of delivery trucks on Spine roads, the other measures to enhance consumer enjoyment of the area seem likely to fail.

[The report recommends that loading and unloading of lorries and other large vehicles, and control of their movements, are considered as a key part of the design process. This further work sits outside the scope of the study.](#)

Shared Space

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the potential benefits of “shared space”, and this is also recognised in the draft Transport Study, which suggests moving from an “enhanced street” model to one of

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“pedestrian prioritised street”. This seems a sensible progression, if we are not ready to bite the bullet and consider pedestrianising the Spine area (which I would personally favour).

My concern about “shared space” is one of security. We have recently seen incidents in the UK and across Europe of vehicles being used as weapons of terror against pedestrians. It is a sad fact of modern life that, in many places, we are seeing the introduction of measures to keep pedestrians and vehicles safely separated. Are we as a Council willing to stand by a judgement that a “shared space” solution will not make it easier for someone to mount a vehicle attack against pedestrians?

[Pedestrian safety would be a key part of any future design.](#)

General Parking

Page 61. The report states that “costs for parking are comparable with other similar-sized market towns in Hampshire, making Petersfield competitive.”

This remark strikes me as dangerously disingenuous. One clear aim of the Neighbourhood Plan is to develop Petersfield as an attractive gateway to the South Downs National Park. In this aim, it is in direct competition with Midhurst, which already styles itself as the centre of the Park. In Midhurst, the first two hours of parking is free. Midhurst is also the closest comparable market town to Petersfield.

Parking charges are a significant factor in determining whether people will visit a town. We should be very wary about building a transport strategy based on selective evidence of comparative parking charges.

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Noted. Petersfield competes with a number of other market towns. The option of introducing free parking is unlikely to be available.

Traffic Flow

I have two main concerns about the analysis of traffic flow in the report:-

The Station Road Barrier

The report shows that the Station Road Barrier is down, on average, for almost 5.5 hours in each 24 hour period. This is in itself a very large period when the traffic flow is significantly impeded. But I would like to know how much of that 5.5 hours is during the time of highest road usage, i.e. between 07:30 and 19:30. If, as I suspect, most of the down time is between those hours, we could be looking at the road being blocked for up to 40% of the time.

The report and Appendix 2 have been amended to show the results of weekdays between 07:00-19:00 (standard traffic survey periods). The results show that there is an average of 70 daily barrier movements over this period, with the barrier down time equating to just under 30% over a 12 hour weekday period – this is now reflected in the report.

Since Station Road would see an increase in levels of traffic being re-routed, are we wholly sure that we would not be creating an even greater congestion problem?

Further survey work, as recommended in the report would help to reach a firmer conclusion.

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Dragon Road

The report's traffic flow studies (Appendix 1) show that Dragon Road is already one of the busiest roads in central Petersfield (consistently orange on the flow maps).

The report states (Page 97) that "this study has shown that capacities on routes alternative to the Town Spine are likely to be able to cater for traffic redistributed from the Town Spine." But it also identifies that Dragon Street would be likely to exceed 85% capacity, but that this could be alleviated by "traffic evaporation." These two statements seem contradictory and possibly based on assumption not fact.

I do not propose to enter into a debate about the theory of traffic evaporation. My concern is that we have no hard evidence on which to base on of the most fundamental judgements of the entire report, namely that Dragon Street could support the extra traffic flow that plans for the Spine would generate. On the contrary, the report itself specifically acknowledges that traffic on Dragon Street would exceed 85% capacity.

Do we have any established methodology to test the validity of the report's conclusion about the capacity of alternative routes before strategic and long-lasting decisions are made ?

A significant increase in congestion on Station Road and Dragon Street could well negate much of the intended benefit of measures along the Spine.

[**The link capacity assessment is supported by methodology set out by the Department for Transport. It is a first step to understand the capacity of the local roads in accommodating traffic reassigned from**](#)

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the High Street. The results were generally positive but identified that the current layout of College Street/Dragon Street may reach its capacity and require mitigation works. Junction assessments would be the next step in this process. Whilst informal discussions have already been held, and HCC is supportive of the content of the study, it is suggested that PTC seek a formal view from Hampshire County Council as to the evidence they would require to progress to delivery.

Specific comments

There is no mention of the fact that at certain times of the day (notably around 3pm to 4pm) there are large numbers of school children walking through the town often in the direction of the railway station.

Section 4.4. I would question some of the remarks about the bus stops in the centre of town the one outside Oxfam seems particularly badly placed.

The statement (p29) “National Express operates a coach service between Portsmouth and London, calling at Petersfield several times daily” is misleading – there are only two a day.

The report has been updated to reflect National Express services.

The remarks about the number of taxis outside the railway station are certainly appropriate. I observed today (9th of August) considerable congestion as a result of the number of taxis parked.

There is no reference to the cycleway signs provided by Sustrans and others outside the railway station.

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Lavant Street scores the highest mark of 2 with regard to wayfinding in the cycle audit (appendix 22) – reflecting the presence of cycle signage on this link. These signs are also shown in the wayfinding audit (appendix 23).

I would question the remarks about traffic on Frenchman's Road (p 30) which is certainly used to avoid delays caused by the level crossing. However, the junction by the forge is so difficult to turn from that the traffic flow is necessarily impeded which could affect the numbers recorded.

The comments in the report regarding Frenchman's Road reflect the results of an ATC survey undertaken outside of the scope of this project (at no further cost to the client) in response to comments raised by PTC. A wider survey would be required to investigate rat-running in this location.

There is no specific reference to the positioning of the controlled pedestrian crossings in the town. I would have thought this was pertinent to the study.

Crossings are referenced at relevant points throughout the study, and detail on individual locations is included as a key part of the pedestrian audit (appendix 20).

The references to home working (p39) were taken in the year 2011 and the use of devices that enable homeworking has increased considerably since then.

Whilst this is possible, the Census remains the best source of data for the purposes of this report.

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The report rightly identifies shop deliveries as a key problem since many shops do not have rear access for deliveries. It is also difficult to see any reasonable solution to this particular problem.

This report aimed to identify an evidence base to inform future design work – it provides a wealth of data to support future design and control options.

The reference in the EHDC reports to levelling car parking charges in the town centre with those at the railway station may be difficult to effect in practice as many of the cars parked at the railway station are for people working in London and enjoying the relatively high salaries experienced there. The nature of their parking (all day) is also different. Some consideration might be given to the problems of parking for local workers.

The reference to the signage needed for the town's Car Parks is a good one and one that could be affected relatively quickly and at little cost.

I would question some of the statements made about the Festival Hall car park which is difficult to access and not very evident to strangers. Although the adjacent crossing provides good walking access to the town thereafter the pedestrian way is messy whichever route is taken.

The report identifies that improvements could be made to both route options from the car park towards the Town Spine.

The references to the Love Lane car park make no mention of its use by persons attending events at the Community Centre. The car park at the Community Centre itself does not appear in the study at all so far as I could ascertain.

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The community centre car park was outside of the scope of the study surveys – however, Hampshire Services does have some survey data for this car park which can be provided at cost.

Despite the otherwise good cycling notes the report makes no specific reference to electric bicycles and their impact. Only today a retired Doctor told me it is quicker for him to travel from Liss to Steep by electric bicycle than by car.

Electric bikes could offer opportunities to grow cycling rates within Petersfield, particularly considering the hilly topography outside of the town centre, however, it was not within the scope of this study to assess potential future impact. The report has been amended to reflect an opportunity to provide electric cycle hire from a cycle hub at the rail station (section 4.4).

The good use of language occasionally slips - Car represents the highest proportion of casualties, followed by cycle, pedestrian and motorcycle. Should presumably read “Car accidents represent the highest proportion of casualties, followed by cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists.” However, it might be better if it was made clear whether it is occupants being referred to or all persons affected by an accident involving a car.

Appendix 10 includes details on casualties and their relevant transport mode. The language referenced above has been amended in the report.

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In section 4.4:

- The first set of bullet points, and accompanying table, omit to reference that service 38's destination is Alton. (in setting a context, it is probably useful to identify that Petersfield is linked to a similar sized market town by bus).
- There is no mention of the bus services to Midhurst (92) and Chichester (54). These have probably been missed off because only HCC services were listed.
- In table 1, the 94 service is listed as being Petersfield to Buriton. Although it does go to Buriton on some journeys, it is predominantly a circular town service, again useful for context setting.
- Figure 11 shows a map and separates out "Community Bus" and "Public Bus" services. What is the difference?

Services missing from the report have been added.

Public services are those run by commercial operators (although some do receive council subsidies) and community services are those more akin to a dial-a-ride service which are often locally organised and can be volunteer led. The report has been updated to reflect these details.

Elsewhere in the document there are a couple of minor typos on street names - St Peters Street, Sussex Street etc.

These errors have been addressed in the report and appendices.

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Summary

- Comprehensive and detailed with some interesting findings
- Findings seem to support the Vision of the Petersfield Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) and suggest the vision could be implemented. It needs to be remembered that the PNP is subject to 5 yearly reviews and the term of the plan is over a number of PTC Councillor Memberships
- Some detail confirms previous not so detailed views which is very handy when answering to the public.
- Some very useful ‘fingertip’ facts and statistics which can support any such implementation as PTC desires over a number of years
- This survey is considered well worth the investment however it does propose continued studies at considerable cost and undoubtedly over a considerable period of time. Public and some Councillor perceptions may be in oppositions to continual studies and very little ‘do’. Indeed I have heard that some consider the TDC to be just a talking shop! My answer to that is “A Town with no Vision has no Future”.

As above, it is proposed that PTC seeks a formal view from HCC as to the evidence that would be required to progress to delivery. Through informal discussions, it is likely that this would involve junction assessments and modelling. Once the scope is confirmed, a proposal for further assessments can be compiled. If feedback is returned within a short timescale, and junction assessments (PICADY/LINSIG) are recommended, it is considered that this could be completed within the next neutral period (Sept-Nov, excluding School holidays), with results provided by Christmas.

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Feedback on Appendixes

General Comments

- The appendices provide a great deal of detailed information backing up the report. Some difficulty experienced in understanding the information they provide.

As above, the PowerPoint presentation can be used as a summary of the report.

Specific comments

No	Title	Comment
1	Google Traffic	Impressive technology to show traffic flow in town.
2	Level X Down Time	Indicates that down time is around 30% of the total time !
3	Level X High Level	Misleading title – it's Frenchman's road traffic flow – and does seem to prove that it is not used as a "rat run" when the gates are down. <i>Addressed</i>
4	Pet Soc Letter	Refers to taxis – which are not mentioned in report? <i>Taxis were included as a travel option (see appendix 19) in the pedestrian survey – no respondents reported arriving by taxi</i>
5	Cycling UK Response +Appendix	Excellent detailed response but comparison with Chichester bit doubtful – it is flat – Petersfield area is not
6	2011 Census analysis	Bit dated – 7 years ago
7	Datashine Maps	Didn't understand these
8	Datashine Commuting Analysis	Not sure what these are telling me
9	Business Survey Template	Makes the point very strongly that day time deliveries will be a major problem for the Plan.
10	Personal Injury Plot	Summary good - Police statistics back up difficult to follow.
11	High St Parking	Lot of illegal parking even when parking space available
12	Town Centre Parking	Good detailed analysis
13	Audit – walking routes	Good but does not draw attention to the lack of paths within car parks. You mix with the motors.
14	Love Lane / Avenue car park surveys	Car parks mostly underused
15	Cycle Parking	Clearly demonstrates ad-hoc nature of cycle parking
16	Motor vehicle counts and realignment	Extensive figures which need careful consideration to establish their significance in realigning traffic.

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X 17?	ID Assessment of through traffic	Again, extensive figures which need careful consideration. Appendix title updated
18	Pedestrian Count	Easily understood figures.
19	Pedestrian Survey	Standard street survey on people's transport and reason for visit to Petersfield centre.
20	Pedestrian Audit	Very comprehensive examination of pedestrian routes
21	Cycle Counts	Straightforward cycle count in different places
X 22?	Cycle Audit	Indicates "Cycling level of Service" – how easy/ safe is it? Appendix title updated
23	Audit of Wayfinding	Shows pedestrian signage in town

A separate response was received from the Petersfield Society (via Petersfield Town Council). This is included in the document pack issued as "final report". Many of the points raised are in line with those already raised by Petersfield Town Council. Outstanding, relevant points are summarised and addressed below.

- PS has requested a discussion with HCC to discuss key points – can they clarify – is this HCC as the Highways Authority, or as the consultant on this project (i.e. Hampshire Services)?
- PS has asked if all of the recent developments in Table 2 are confirmed, we can confirm that they have all been determined by SDNPA.
- PS should ask HCC Safety Engineering Team for details of the planned safety scheme at Rams Hill/Hogarth Close
- 3 hour restricted parking on Tor Way should read "College Street" – this is now reflected in the report
- The report suggests that the Causeway (Tesco) car park is the most appropriate location for decking – this is in support of the aims of the Town Spine Vision which focuses on people visiting the town centre, as opposed to the train station. Decking of the train station car park may well alleviate on-street parking issues in Petersfield but this was outside of the scope of this report.

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Decked car parks at either these locations are not considered to be mutually exclusive but it should be noted that decking of the train station is likely to support commuter trips rather than enhancing the town centre.

- Car park analysis does not include growth from development at this time. A further piece of work could include a sensitivity test to include a growth factor.
- PS point out that the section of road between Tor Way and High Street is College Street and not Dragon Street as the report states. This has been amended.
- PS highlighted two crossing points missing from Figure 28. The crossing on Tor Way was not included as it is not within the immediate vicinity of the Spine however, this crossing, and the uncontrolled crossing by The Square Brewery have now been added to the figure.
- Descriptions of junctions for future assessments have been updated.
- PS has raised concerns regarding safety at junction of Station Road/Lavant Street, and station forecourt. The five year casualty record shows no collisions in this location. A recent scheme delivered by HCC in 2015/16 on Lavant Street and the station forecourt was compliant with Safety Audit procedures.
- PS raised that a number of junctions have not been considered within the report in relation to the level crossing. As above, the analysis work carried out for the level crossing was at a very high level and outside of the scope of this project (at no cost to the client) in response to comments raised by PTC. A wider survey would be required to the impact of the level crossing in this location.