

Wiltshire Council

Chippenham Area Board

10 September 2013

Item 8 – Chippenham Skate Park Task Group Report

From Marc Allum, Chippenham Resident

Question 3

I am a resident of St Mary Street and am Submitting a question for the board in relation to the proposed skatepark development in Monkton Park.

This is a highly contentious project and has raised many questions concerning the validity and authority of the council to build a skatepark. I would draw to the attention of the board the Wiltshire Council Chippenham Conservation Area Appraisal of November 2007 which is, to say the least very scathing of many aspects of the previous development of the 'historic parkland' of Monkton Park. Monkton Park actually starts at the large gates outside the council offices, unfortunately, this is no longer park as was intended. The report is peppered with comments such as 'the bulk and massing of the Olympiad is particularly unsympathetic to the space, particularly when viewed from the open parkland' and 'This view in particular, in conjunction with the council offices, telephone exchange and college buildings creates a particularly and unattractive jarring view'.

Many of these buildings should have arguably never been built and serve as a constant reminder of poor planning decisions in a conservation area. Unfortunately, and despite the very words (and there are plenty more damning comments in the report) commissioned by Wiltshire Council in this comprehensive paper http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/chippenham_caa_april_08-3.pdf there seems to be little or no serious interest on the part of the Task Group to preserve the remaining integrity of the conservation area. I for one live in St Mary Street proudly as a custodian of an historic property, one for which I have to seek permission at all times to affect even minor repairs. My question is therefore straightforward; in the light of such a report which I am assuming all the concerned parties are aware of, are any of them interested in endeavouring to preserve the important historic elements of this historic town? Let's not make any more mistakes, let's give the kids their skatepark but not in the middle of an already stressed conservation area!