

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**27 November 2018**

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## **Questions**

**Anne Henshaw – Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)**

**Comments and Questions on Wiltshire Core Strategy**

**To Councillor Toby Sturgis – Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning,  
Development Management and Property**

### Statement

CPRE requested during the consultation process preparation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2006 – 2026 that a policy should be created to cover the land area surrounding Junction 17 M4. This was ignored.

We raised the same issue, and that of employee transport linkages, at the subsequent Public Examination of the Core Strategy and were told that this was not relevant since the area was not included in any development proposals.

Now a major business development permission has been granted south-east of Junction 17 to St. Modwen and it is no secret that other developers have land interests to the north-east of the junction.

The rapid growth of economic development on part of Hullavington former airfield is a third factor.

We have subsequently asked again who determines plans for this area and were told the Joint Spatial Framework.

Is this area is to identified under the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan, (SEP) presently A350 corridor south/west, (but could extend north over the next Plan period to 2036) and, we repeat,

### Question 1

Could it be explained why the land is not covered by a suitable policy to take into account rapid land use changes anticipated with economic development over the next 18 years.

## Response

The policy considerations and merits of the proposal for the permitted development at Junction 17 is set out in the report to Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) of 28 February 2018, which can be viewed via this link:

<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s140844/17.03417.OUT%20Chippenham%20Gateway.pdf>

Following completion of the Section 106 agreement the decision was issued on 23 August 2018.

Junction 17 was considered through the Core Strategy process, but was not taken forward as an allocation due to the focus of the strategy on delivering economic growth at Principal Settlements and Market Towns to provide a better balance of jobs and housing at these places.

The SPC report refers to Core Policy 34 'Additional Employment Land' in assessing the development at Junction 17. This forms appropriate strategic policy against which proposals for additional land that emerge during the plan period can be assessed alongside other policies in the development plan. Paragraph 6.13 of the supporting text states:

*“Core Policy 34 also includes an element of flexibility to allow new employment opportunities to come forward outside but adjacent to the Principal Settlements, Market Towns and Local Service Centres, and in addition to the employment land allocated by this Core Strategy, where such proposals are considered to be essential to the economic development of Wiltshire. It also allows for the possibility of development essential to the wider strategic interest of the economic development of Wiltshire. In considering criterion viii of Core Policy 34 any such proposals should be supported by evidence to justify that they would not have a significant adverse impact upon existing, committed and planned public and private investment at sites identified in the Plan for employment development at Principal Settlements or Market Towns. Support for such proposals will be an exception to the general approach, and any applications of this nature will need to be determined by the relevant planning committee (and not by officers using delegated powers).”*

## Question 2

Has a review of strategic employment locations taken place along with the review of housing allocations and the review of the Core Strategy as a whole?

We note from the consultations held in November 2017 that a) the Joint Spatial Framework is a non-statutory document and is used as a basis for coordinating Local Plan reviews and b) it forms the basis for plan making. We understand a review of the Core Strategy is under way.

## Response

The Wiltshire Employment Land Review (May 2018) has been prepared to inform the review of the Core Strategy (known as the Local Plan Review). It updates the Wiltshire Workspace and Employment Land Strategy published in 2011, which informed the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The report is available on the Council's website at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review>.

### Question 3

Will the Spatial Planning Team now inform us whether a land plan in the form of a Policy for the wider area around the Junction has been prepared through the Joint Spatial Framework as part of the review of the Core Strategy?”

### Response

Information on the review of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (known as the Local Plan Review) and the proposed Joint Spatial Framework can also be found on the link to the Council’s website provided in the response to Question 2.

It is too early to say whether the site will be allocated as part of the Local Plan Review. However, consideration will be given to the Employment Land Review referred to in response to Question 2, which forms part of the evidence informing the review of the plan. Junction 17 is discussed at paragraph 7.22, Page 65:

*“...the supply of employment sites in Wiltshire will broadly accommodate the county’s forecast demand, although there will be a need for some further allocations in certain places, and the situation should be monitored to ensure that there is ongoing supply available. Two potential sites at M4 Junction 17 have been suggested for development, and so considered as part of this Employment Land Review. However, it is not necessary to allocate these sites to meet the forecast demand in Wiltshire. Given the size of the two sites – a combined 77 Ha – their allocation would lead to a significant excess of supply over demand, which could affect the deliverability of other employment sites in Wiltshire. Although able to accommodate large units, and well located for motorway access, the sites are not adjacent to any reasonably sized towns. Most of the existing supply is in close proximity to BUAs, to maximise sustainability through proximity to workforce.*

*Despite there being little case for these large sites to meet locally derived demand within Wiltshire, they may be appropriate for and attractive to businesses in strategically important sectors searching for sites at the regional or national level, or for strategically important activities which cannot be located anywhere else in the county.*

*These sites could be considered for development if any high value, exceptional proposals in target growth sectors are seeking sites in the county. The sites could accommodate high value inward investment that would not otherwise come to Wiltshire. The target growth sectors identified in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Swindon & Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan include: Advanced Manufacturing, Business Services, Biosciences, Digital Security, Environmental Technologies, Food & Drink, Health, ICT, and Life Sciences. They could also accommodate growth in the key areas, or grand challenges, identified in the UK Industrial Strategy (currently a White Paper) i.e. Artificial Intelligence & Data, Clean Growth, Mobility, Ageing, R&D, electric vehicles, life sciences, and construction.”*