

**Public Participation
Item No. 11 – Second Tranche Campus Proposals**

CRICKLADE

Statement by Mr John Coole, Cricklade

I am unsure to whom this email should be addressed but I want to write in the strongest terms to object to the proposals that are being put forward for the Campus in Cricklade. I would appreciate it if you can ensure that it is seen by Cabinet Members in advance of the meeting. Can you confirm please?

The proposals that are being put to Cabinet do not reflect the true position. Residents have been misled by Wiltshire Council Officers and by others. An Area Board meeting only 2 weeks ago agreed that the Campus proposals would be centred on the Leisure Centre and in the High Street with the Ockwells building being the only available site. An assurance was given to us at a previous Town Council meeting was that the proposals to use the old Police Station were now 'off the agenda'. Sighs of relief all round!

We are now told there has been another about turn resulting in the current proposals that are to go to Cabinet.

All through this process there has been inadequate public consultation. The first 'consultation' was extremely vague and the question of a preferred site was not asked. The second consultation, we are told, favoured Ockwells as the preferred site. However the SCOB decided to go against public opinion and recommended the Police Station as the preferred site. Despite concerns being raised the Town Council (ignoring the many protests at the meeting) choose to follow this recommendation. We are then informed that there was insufficient money to renovate the Police Station and Ockwells would be the preferred site, hence the recommendation to the Area Board. Now 2 weeks on we are informed that money has been found thus denying anyone opposing the plans the opportunity to voice their opinions to the Area Board.

To make matters worse we find that the decision on this important matter of local concern is to be made in Salisbury possibly the furthest possible location from Cricklade. So much for localism and democracy! I'm afraid it is impossible for me to make a daytime meeting some 50+ miles away.

I would also like to point out that there are a number of factual inaccuracies in the document being presented. Some of the facts presented are extremely questionable and seem to be based on conjecture rather than research.

If I were a member of the Cabinet about to spend considerable sums of public money I would insist that

- a. Proper and full consultation takes place.
- b. That a proper business case is submitted.
- c. That public money is used to better effect.

Of course we want to see investment in the Town Leisure Centre and in the provision of local services - that is fully supported, much better any additional monies are spent on the Leisure Centre than on an ill thought out scheme to renovate the Police Station (a building of no local significance) that could more easily be sold to raise any additional funds required (and considerably more attractive to any developer). The current Ockwells Building has important historical links with the administration of local government in the Town and should not be lost to the Community.

At the very least I would ask that you seek more information before any decision is made.