

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**1 December 2020**

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**From Peter Cousins**

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

#### **Item 8 – Consultation to inform the Wiltshire Local Plan Review**

##### **Statement**

Over past months Conservative leaders in councils are becoming increasingly vocal in their opposition to the plans for further housing which they fear could result in countryside being concreted over for housing and core voters deserting them in disgust.

Martin Tett, the Conservative leader of Buckinghamshire council stated demands for an extra 1,000 homes to be built a year in his country were “undesirable and undeliverable”

Cllr David Renard, Conservative leader of Swindon council and planning spokesman for the Local Government Association said. “What local government would like to see is numbers based on local needs rather than some algorithm imposing numbers from above. We are hopeful the government will reshape their proposals. The planning system can be improved and we don’t think this is the right way to do it.”

A survey carried out on behalf of BECG, a planning communications firm, showed that 70% of Tory councillors in England want to increase the size of the greenbelt,

Are WCC pushing back this policy as other Tory councils in England? I understand from Councillor Clewers comments at Chippenham Area Board, Wiltshire have identified 2000 families or people in need of a home currently living in Wiltshire, yet they are accepting that 40, 000+ houses are to be built in the county, just because central government tells them to do so. Surely the council should represent the needs of the counties residents and push back on these crazy demands from Westminster.

##### **Question 1**

Why have plans for this development in Chippenham, and presumably others in Wiltshire, gone forward in secret, with secret discussions in councils where members of the public and press were not allowed, resulting in no local consultation or scrutiny. What have WCC got to hide?

##### **Response**

The purpose of the report on Agenda Item 8 'Consultation to inform the Wiltshire Local Plan Review' is to approve documents for public consultation, providing the opportunity for local communities and other stakeholders to put forward their view when the consultation starts early 2021. The outcome of the consultation will inform the preparation of the draft Plan.

The overall level of new homes that are referred to in the consultation material (see Appendix 1 Emerging Spatial Strategy) was considered by Cabinet in April 2019 and are publicly available.