

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

18th October 2011

Public Participation

**Question from Mr Michael Sprules, - Chairperson RADAR
(Residents Against Development Affecting Recreational Land)**

Question

Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (13/06/11 to 08/08/11)

Cabinet Members and attending Elected Members

I would like to bring to Cabinet Members attention the comment that I put forward regarding the draft Core Strategy :

Any Other Comments

As Chairperson of R.A.D.A.R., I would like to make the following points regarding Chippenham: -

Whilst I am pleased to see the removal of Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground from the "**Housing Element**" of the Core Strategy, I would strenuously request that it should be included as part of the "**Green Infrastructure Strategy**" without delay !!

Recreation Grounds of such unique value to the local Community should be "**Ring-fenced**" and protected by Wiltshire Council within a given area of this Core Strategy. I am unable to find such an area into which this comment should be included.

Previous to this Consultation, I have taken part in two previous Consultations where Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground was identified as a site to be protected by Local Residents ! I trust that this Consultation Comment will not be declared invalid due to the "**Removal**" of Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground from the Core Strategy document, as this would render six years of Continued Consultation, to identify Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground as a significant Community Asset, as unimportant in the eyes of Wiltshire Council.

From my visits to Cabinet, over the past eight months, I know that "**Engaging with the Local Community**" is how Wiltshire Council is moving forward. I would, therefore urge Wiltshire Council to show that six years of highlighting Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground has not been in vain !!

Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground is **STILL IN USE** !! I was very sad to learn that, Spatial Planning were under the mistaken impression that it was a derelict site !! I would strenuously urge Wiltshire Council Officers to **CHECK ALL FACTS** for themselves first, rather than be misled by Agents and Applicants.

There is a lack of Good Quality Recreational Facilities within Chippenham.

Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground would make a fantastic Sport Hub for the Local Community within Chippenham. It has good links to Local Communities, is a safe and secure Ground as it is **COMPLETELY LANDLOCKED**, and is accessible to the Local Community for the very purpose it was always intended for.

Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground will have a much larger significance within the next year. The Pavilion, Bowls Green & Hard Tennis Courts were opened by Lord Burghley, 6th Marquess of Exeter, in 1937. Best known for the Burghley Horse Trials, Lord Burghley was also a great Olympian. The Olympic Games of 2012 will be hosted by the United Kingdom. Indeed, the Torch will come through Salisbury on its route to London. Clearly, Wiltshire Council values the importance of the Olympic Torch coming through Wiltshire, indeed, maybe the Olympic Torch could come to Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground, in recognition of the fact that it was opened by Lord Burghley? . I hope, also, that Wiltshire Council will value the need to protect such a valuable Community Asset by protecting it within the Core Strategy Document!

Wiltshire Council are now looking to **"Put Forward"** sites for inclusion into the Fields In Trust 2012 Challenge ! What kudos would come forward to Wiltshire Council if Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground - with facilities opened by such an important Olympian as Lord Burghley, were to be put forward as a **"2012 Field" !!**

In Conclusion the Westinghouse Sports & Recreation Ground should be retained as Open Space for the Local Community, as a Recreation Ground for which it was intended or as a Community Facility which is sadly lacking in the Cepen Park Wards.

Taking my Core Strategy comment into consideration, my question to Cabinet is :

Whilst I am aware that Cabinet can in no way comment on an individual site, are you able to give an assurance that my comment will be fed into the Core Strategy Document and that six years of consultation comments will be taken forward as "Evidence Base" in the "Final Draft" of the Core Strategy and that the "Final Draft" will be sent to those of us who have made these comments ?

May I, once again, thank Cabinet Members and, indeed, Elected Members for allowing me to ask this question.

Response

I can confirm that we are aware of the issues relating to this site and can also confirm that your comments have been fed into the Core strategy development process and that all representations made do form part of the evidence base which informs the development of the Core Strategy.

Everyone who has made a representation and given us contact details will be informed when the draft Wiltshire Core strategy is out for consultation. Hard copies will be available in libraries and council offices and will be sent to individuals on request.