

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**1 December 2020**

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**From Susan McGill**

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

**Item 8 – Consultation to Inform the Wiltshire Local Plan Review**

**Statement**

Before it even considers the possibility of 7,500 houses and a 4-5 kilometre road cutting over the Chippenham Avon and through the River Marden valleys, Wiltshire Council is obligated to address the deep contradictions in its published strategies for land allocation, housing need, and transport requirements. Only then can it responsibly appraise, let alone propose a future strategy for Chippenham.

The contradictions include the following—

Wiltshire Council's Housing Land Supply statement (August 2019, base date 2018), acknowledging compliance with NPPF and PPG, said that the five-year (2018-2023) housing requirement for North and West [Wiltshire] Housing Market Area, including a 5% buffer, was 6,910 houses. (Housing Land Supply Statement, 2019, p.7)

According to the Chippenham Area Strategy, adopted as part of the Wiltshire Core Strategy in early 2015 (the date of adoption isn't clear—the adoption statement of January 2015 refers to "xx January 2015"), phased housing development in Chippenham would "enable employment development to come forward in advance of further residential development". (5.48, p. 93)

In 2017 as part of the Wiltshire Development Framework. It used a developer's proposal for developing 50ha of land at Rawlings Green, a Wiltshire Council County Farm east of Chippenham. It specified no more than 200 dwellings initially, followed by 450 more.

However, in December, 2019, MHCLG approved a bid by Wiltshire Council to build 7500 houses along the unspecified route of a road linking the B4069 and the A350, which the council, in 2017, had stipulated for approval of initial development of 250 houses, followed by 450 more in due course. (Chippenham Site Allocations Plan, 2017, p. 34).

The plans and proposals in the public domain that have been published by Wiltshire Council (including its own environmental assessment of the Chippenham Avon and

its assessment of employment opportunities in Chippenham) are substantially and significantly incompatible with the limited information available about:

- the council's bid in 2019 to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)
- how the HIF bid and the associated 7,500 houses fit into Wiltshire's Core Strategy
- Chippenham's newly assessed housing "need"
- the assessed need for a link road
- the assessed purpose of a link road.

There are no grounds whatsoever for consultations with Chippenham residents until they have full and transparent access to information. This information must account for the major discrepancies between press briefings, or off the cuff statements in Council meetings, and published Council policy documents that claim to comply with national guidance.