

Wiltshire Council

Full Council

18 July 2023

Item 10 – Wiltshire Local Plan Review

From Nick Parry

To Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management and Strategic Planning

Preamble

Council bias over Chippenham allocation.

As Wiltshire Council have spent vast sums of our money promoting this site and Richard Clewer stated the Local Plan was an independent process perhaps we should question why the most suitable sites were not progressed? Chippenham has been here before at the last site allocation plan where it took Wiltshire Council 3 attempts over several years to get a plan approved all at the council tax payers expense. It appears you have learnt nothing from this previous disaster.

It is abundantly clear to any sensible person that the Council's funding and liabilities have affected this outcome and this should not be allowed.

Clearly from the start (Hif bid and “Future Chippenham” where housing required figures were adjusted) to the finish (this draft plan) Wiltshire Council has acted unscrupulously.

There are other locations around the town which perform just as favourably which do not require a river crossing spanning in excess of 400 meters and are better located to the town, delivering better outcomes for Chippenham and the public as a whole.

Question (P23-14)

- a) It is my understanding that the land at Middlelodge farm, Lowerlodge farm and a part of Lackham is owned by the Council so technically owned as County farms which are part of the assets of the community so the answers given on last weeks [Cabinet supplement 1](#) (and detailed below) where you say won't be at a cost to the Council the population of the town or County are incorrect and they will be at a very considerable cost to all. Is this answer correct?

Question 10 (23-64) to Cabinet on 11/07/23

Why has your Council and planning department totally ignored the overwhelming rejection by the local population of Chippenham to this Southern scheme and all

the unnecessary infrastructure, extortionate costs and desecration of habitat involved.

Response to Question 10 (23-64) to Cabinet on 11/07/23

The Council has not ignored local concerns and continues to address them in progressing the plan.

A site allocation south of Pewsham has been selected having considered the other options available at the town to ensure that sufficient site allocations are identified to meet the level of housing to be planned for the Town over the period to 2038.

Much of the infrastructure necessary to support the development will have wider benefit, which as stated in response to 9 won't be at cost to the Council, the population of the town or County. Development is required to deliver biodiversity net gain not a loss.

- b) Also, just to make this blatantly clear. It is my understanding that as the Council are classed as the owners of County farms they therefore are the landowners that much of the cost for infrastructure will come from which is of course the public purse in one way or another. Is this the case? (In relation to question 7 (23-61) and 8 (23-62) submitted to [Cabinet](#) last week and detailed below).

Question 7 (23-61) to Cabinet on 11/07/23

At what estimated cost which I am sure should be a consideration for the population of the town and also the county, not just your Council cabal?

Response to Question 7 (23-61) to Cabinet on 11/07/23

See response to Questions 8 and 9. None of the population of the town or County will contribute to the cost of the scheme.

Question 8 (23-62) to Cabinet on 11/07/23

Who is going to pay?

Response to Question 8 (23-62) to Cabinet on 11/07/23

*The proposal is no different to other proposals in the draft Plan. The cost of constructing a river bridge, like other infrastructure, is borne by the developers and **landowners** from the development value of the scheme.*

Response:

The response to Question 8 is correct, if agricultural land is allocated for development in a Local Plan, a landowner if not developing the site themselves will sell it at above agricultural value reflecting its development value for the allocated uses. The cost of infrastructure will be borne by the developer(s) of the land.

Question (P23-15)

What is the estimated cost for this road given that it is required to deliver this proposed Southern scheme and I am sure that it should be a consideration for the population of the town, the councillors and also the County, not just your Council cabal. Any valid consultation on this Local Plan should have some idea of the infrastructure costs involved? And who is going to pay these road and bridge building costs?

Response:

The Plan anticipates that infrastructure will be delivered through developer contributions. Infrastructure costs have been addressed as part of Plan preparation and there is considered to be sufficient headroom to absorb these as part of the proposed development. The assumptions made in the emerging viability evidence for infrastructure will be made available for consultation. The final costs will be determined through the planning application process, which will be based on masterplanning, phasing and delivery strategy that has been informed by detailed transport assessments and other evidence.