

# AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

## (Morning Meeting)

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**Meeting:** Cabinet  
**Place:** Council Chamber - Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge,  
BA14 0RD  
**Date:** Tuesday 17 January 2012  
**Time:** 10.30 am

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The Agenda for the above meeting was published on 9 January 2012. Since then a number of questions and statements have been received in respect of items 7 and 9 on the agenda details of which are included with this supplement.

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda Supplement to Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718024 or email [yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

This Supplement and corresponding Agenda are available on the Council's website at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

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7. **Wiltshire & Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD - Proposed Submission Arrangements** (Pages 1 - 48)

Questions and responses and statements received attached.

9. **Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings** (Pages 49 - 114)

Questions and responses and statements received attached.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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## **Public Participation**

### **Statements and Questions from Mrs Virginia Neal, Clerk to Chitterne Parish Council**

#### **Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission Arrangements (Item 7)**

##### **Statement 1**

Chitterne Parish Council are dismayed that the Valley Farm site is still included as a site for waste development in the Proposed Waste Site Allocations DPD. We feel that the real and clear objections raised by Chitterne Parish Council and village residents have been ignored. We would ask that cabinet members are given the full text of the objections submitted by Chitterne Parish Council before any decision is made. The summary in Appendix B is inadequate.

##### **Response**

Objections raised by Chitterne Parish Council and village residents have not been ignored. Following the last round of consultation, the objections raised were discussed with the County Ecologist, County Archaeologist, Principal Conservation Officer, Landscape Officers and Highways Officers and several changes to the site profile have been made as a result. None of the professionals consulted saw any reason to remove the site from the document, as all issues raised can be addressed through robust mitigation measures at the planning application stage.

A response to the consultation was also received from the Environment Agency who support all the sites in the document providing the mitigation measures set out in the site profile are enforced.

Cabinet Members have been given the full text of the objections submitted by Chitterne Parish Council as requested.

##### **Statement 2**

Chitterne Parish Council have no record of having been consulted during 2006 and 2010. The proposed development was discovered on the agenda of the Warminster Area Board before we were informed by letter. It is our opinion that Wiltshire Council have failed to consult adequately with Chitterne Parish Council. We feel that, in the light of our substantial objections, the process of consultation has been totally inadequate. Taking into account the potential and serious implications for the residents of Chitterne, villagers would have welcomed a more open and involved process of consultation.

## **Council response**

In accordance with regulatory requirements, all Parish and Town Councils within and surrounding Wiltshire and Swindon have been consulted at all preparatory stages<sup>1</sup>. All Parish Clerks were informed of the consultations through written letters and the parish newsletter.

### **Question 1**

Chitterne is not 'local' to anywhere. We are unclear as to where the waste destined for Chitterne is to come from. Why is it necessary to consider a small, vulnerable settlement such as Chitterne for this development when there exist other more suitable sites with better main A road access as outlined in the DPD? Has the site been kept in the DPD purely because it is landowner led?

In the interests of transparency, how much would Wiltshire Council be paying for the use of the Valley Farm site – has it been selected as it is the cheapest option?

## **Council response**

- *Where is the waste destined for Chitterne to come from?*

It is not the role of the plan to determine the specific catchment and volume of waste to be managed at each individual site proposal. Such matters will be addressed through any subsequent planning application process.

- *Why is it necessary to consider Chitterne for this development when other sites are available?*

Since 2005, 113 potential waste sites have been appraised across Wiltshire and Swindon. The Waste Site Allocations document presents a framework of 35 sites which offers a range of potential waste uses to meet the projected capacity requirements of Wiltshire and Swindon up to 2026. The final list of sites is now considered to be the best and most deliverable options for future waste management development.

- *Has the site been kept in the DPD because it is landowner led?*

No. The site is promoted by the landowner but has been subject to the same rigorous assessment as all the other sites in the document. We have dropped other sites promoted by other landowners which did not pass the appraisal process.

- *How much would Wiltshire Council be paying for the use of the Valley Farm site?*

The site has not been included in the draft plan for the benefit of the council. As the site is being promoted by the landowner, we cannot envisage a situation where the Council will, or would want to take it over.

### **Question 2**

Substantial objections were submitted under each of the headings put forward by the Wiltshire Council for submissions – traffic issues, landscape and visual, water

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<sup>1</sup> Issue and Options consultation – March 2006; Additional informal consultation – January 2010; and Pre-submission consultation – June 2011.

environment, biodiversity/geodiversity, historic, environment and cultural heritage

In particular the issue of traffic has been ignored. Chitterne already suffers from heavy and speeding traffic (rat running to avoid the jams on the A303) causing community severance and severe danger to villagers who take their lives in their hands when walking, cycling catching the school bus or riding on the B390, where in places there is no footpath and is very narrow. The road from Tilshead is very narrow and unsuitable for any type of lorry.

In the light of this very obvious problem, why is the site at Valley farm still being considered as a site for local recycling and waste transfer when clearly the increase in vehicle movements will exacerbate the already very dangerous roads?

In the matter of traffic, we are supported by the findings of the Atkins Report (2.1.2) *The village of Chitterne is subject to an 18 tonne weight restriction, meaning that all vehicles should only route via the A36 to access the site.* May we ask how this is going to be achieved?

### **Council response**

The concerns raised in relation to traffic will be addressed by adopted waste policy (WDC11) and through any subsequent detailed planning application process. The plan presents proposals and as such, cannot comment on, or pre-determine a specific detail (such as the precise nature of routeing agreements) until a planning application has been put forward. The site profile states that a Capacity/Impact Assessment and Transport Assessment will be required as part of any planning application. These assessments will need to identify measures to mitigate and / or compensate for any associated transport impacts.

### **Supplementary questions**

1. It is clear from the Atkins that traffic accessing the proposed site should only do so from the west; however, the council has proposed an impact assessment on traffic approaching from the east. Does this mean they intend to ignore the clear recommendation of their own consultants?

### **Council response**

The village of Chitterne is subject to an 18 tonne weight restriction, but the Traffic Regulation Order for the B390 / C22 states that the weight restriction does not apply if the vehicle is:

- (a) Being used for the purposes of loading and unloading
- (b) An 'authorised vehicle' and is travelling to and from and 'operating centre' in, or adjacent to the road.

In recognition of this, the site profile states that "Development at the site should be controlled by condition and legal agreement to prevent, or at least minimise, unnecessary vehicle movements accessing or leaving via Chitterne village.

Thank you for pointing the text error. We will ensure that the site profile text is amended to reflect the need for an impact assessment on traffic approaching from the west.

2. Atkins has identified risks to the public water supply through groundwater contamination; flooding and contamination of a vulnerable main aquifer. Why are the council proposing to continue to pursue the use of the Valley Farm site in the face of these clear and present dangers?

### **Council response**

The Environment Agency has been consulted at all stages in the preparation of the document and have no objections to the site being allocated for waste uses, provided the mitigation measures set out in the site profile are enforced.

3. Why are Wiltshire Council even considering such an inappropriate development within the open and rolling countryside of Salisbury Plain on a major tourist route between Salisbury, Bath and Stonehenge?

### **Council response**

The Landscape Officer, Conservation Officer and County Archaeologist have been consulted in the preparation of the document and they support the site being allocated for waste uses, provided the mitigation measures set out in the site profile are enforced.

4. We note that Ludgershall has been removed from the DPD for reasons not dissimilar to those demonstrated by Chitterne. Why?

### **Council response**

The Castledown Business Park site at Ludgershall has been removed from the plan for the reasons summarised in the Cabinet Report (paragraphs 13 to 15). These are repeated for ease of reference below.

- “13. In terms of the level of objection received, the majority of concerns related to the proposals at Ludgershall (Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill). The majority of these objections were generated by a community organised petition, signed by 399 people. The main issues presented were concerned with the impact of waste development on the local community and the surrounding land uses that have been developed since the site was first proposed back in 2005. In particular, concerns were raised regarding Castledown Business Park related to the proximity of Wellington Academy, scale of operation in terms of vehicle movement (road safety, congestion issues), low level of employment generated by waste uses and support for the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy that identifies Castledown Business Park as a Principal Employment Area, where activities falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8 are promoted. This called into question the suitability of the use of this site for waste management facilities.*
- 14. It should also be noted that, during the final round of consultation, Cabinet Capital Assets Committee on 14 June 2011 agreed that the Council purchase Castledown Business Park to help stimulate regeneration opportunities in the area accordance with Council’s Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan focuses on delivery of new jobs across Wiltshire.*
- 15. These factors have been fully considered and as result the Castledown Business Park site has been removed from the plan.”*

5. Will there be an opportunity to have a public meeting to deal with some of these major issues confronting the community of Chitterne in the near future?

**Council response**

The Waste Site Allocations document has now reached the final preparatory stage and is due to be submitted, along with all supporting documents, to the Secretary of State for the purpose of initiating the independent Examination process. The Examination will consider matters of soundness and objectors may be invited by the Planning Inspector to take part in the hearing sessions.

In accordance with the councils' Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) the council has endeavoured to ensure communities have been involved in the decision making process. In accordance with adopted waste policy (WCS7) the council will continue to involve people if, and when, a planning application is being prepared.

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### Appendix 3

The photographs submitted in the Atkins Report are misleading. They were taken in the existing inert waste site, at a level which no longer exists and which members of the public are denied access to. These scenes entirely fail to show the landscape context of the proposed development and are entirely irrelevant because the tip will be filled with topsoil and landscaped when the agreed levels are reached.

The following photographs show the view members of the public can see, from the B390, The Imber range track (a popular walk for villagers and tourists) and the Chitterne Farm East road, a public right of way. The totally unspoiled nature of the surrounding countryside, in every direction, is demonstrated.



*Above, view from A390 west (Knook end), Below, view across field to landfill site with proposed site for development behind landfill.*





*Closer view of current landfill with proposed development site behind.*



*View from Imber range path with Chitterne village in foreground, Valley Farm and the present landfill activity in the middle distance, demonstrating a) the proposed site is not '...remote from the village' and b) the location is visible from a considerable distance on a well-used tourist track.*





*Village of Chitterne in foreground, showing B390, Valley Farm and the proposed site at middle right.*

*Far from being a 'remote location' the proposed site is clearly visible from both western and eastern approaches to the village. Can be seen by villagers and tourists accessing roads and footpaths in and around the village and is close enough to the settlement for any noise, smell or traffic impacts to be significant.*

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## **Public Participation**

### **Statement from Adele Martin, Ludgershall & Campaigner of No2Waste on Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission Arrangements (Item 7)**

#### **Statement**

I understand from the No2Waste Campaign Group Leaders that the Castledown Business Park has been removed from the Waste Site Allocations document.

Whilst this is brilliant news from our point of view, given the various valid and genuine reasons for our oppositions, my husband and I are still concerned to discover that Pickpit Hill remains in the Waste Site Allocations document. This in itself is just moving the problem less than 1/4 of a mile away from the original allocated site. It will still remain close homes, future development in the area, the Academy, not to mention the same potential problems with increased traffic, noise and air pollution and danger to our children and the students of the Academy.

We understand from the No2Waste Leaders that Pickpit Hill is still listed with the following potential uses: materials recovery facility, waste transfer station, inert waste recycling/transfer, composting, local recycling and household recycling centre and the suggestion that traffic is diverted away from Tidworth along the A3026 through to Ludgershall and along the A342 to Andover to join the A303 is still proposed. We further understand that the reason it is still in the Waste Site Allocations document is because the land is owned by the MOD who are happy for its inclusion.

With this criteria still in the document for Pickpit Hill how can we be sure that Hills and their transfer station, or one (or more) of the other more undesirable operations listed, won't come back on the table? Or they apply for planning and once planning permission is granted the MOD lease or sell them further land for them to expand. It is our opinion that Pickpit Hill is not an enviable site for development; given the layout of the land and the poor access. It would be a mammoth task and very costly to develop and land and road structure.

Having briefly discussed these issues with the No2Waste Leaders, we agree that Pickpit Hill is still too close to the Academy. It will also be too close to the new housing development on the Eastern Quadrant in Tidworth. Basically all the issues we raised in the campaign, i.e. air/water/noise pollution, traffic congestion etc, are still major concerns as far as Pickpitt Hill are concerned.

Also to bear in mind is the large increase of heavy vehicles that will be going to and from the site, passing the Academy especially as it is still being proposed that traffic is diverted away from Tidworth.

There are two steep hills either side Pickpitt Hill which the heavy vehicles will need to climb in order to get to the site, causing delays in traffic and unnecessary risks being taken by drivers stuck behind slow moving or stationary heavy vehicles waiting to get into the site at key points during the course of the day.

The footpath runs the entirety along the A3026 between Ludgershall and Tidworth, children and students are using this at least twice a day going to and from the Academy. Given that the Academy works from early morning into the evenings, students are using this route at various times during the course of the day at least 5 days per week.

Furthermore, the weather conditions we can experience through the winter months can be treacherous at the best of times for a normal flow of traffic without taking into account the additional heavy vehicles which would be using this road. We appreciate that the Council endeavors to keep the roads clear as best as they can but despite their best intentions this is not usually the case around our area. This in itself would increase the danger to our children and students.

The noise pollution to the residents who live along the A342 would become unbearable not to mention the air pollution. Most residents would not even attempt to open their windows to air their homes or enjoy family afternoons in the garden, at the Old Castle or at the Polo Field due to the air pollution this site would still create. The air pollution would rise above Ludgershall and Tidworth creating a permanent health risk to the residents.

We have many elderly residents, most of which have lived here all or most their lives, and younger children who walk to the shops and alongside what is already an extremely busy road with only one pedestrian crossing.

I will be writing to the Duke of York, Prince Andrew again on this matter given his personal interest in the Academy as President and keeping him informed on all matters relating.

## **Response**

### ***Traffic, transport and environmental concerns:***

The assessment work undertaken by the council in preparation of the draft plan identified a range of highway matters to be addressed through any subsequent planning application process. The draft plan presents the findings of the initial transport assessments and sets out indicative design standards for access/ egress.

In addition, it [*the plan*] also identifies the requirement for a full Transport Assessment (TA) to be prepared in support of any subsequent planning application. Matters in relation to potential cumulative highway impacts associated with planned housing and employment development in the area will need to be addressed through the application and TA process.

Notwithstanding the results of the appraisals undertaken to inform the draft plan, the council would also expect any subsequent planning application to fully address the relevant policies of the adopted development plan. Critical policies to address include those set out in the adopted Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Development Control Policies DPD, including:

- WDC1 - Key criteria for ensuring sustainable waste management development
- WDC2 – Managing the impact of waste management
- WDC3 – Water environment
- WDC4 – Protection of recreational assets
- WDC7 – Conserving landscape character
- WDC8 – Biodiversity and geological interest
- WDC9 – Cultural heritage
- WDC11 – Sustainable transportation of waste

Clearly, where applications on allocated (and un-allocated) sites fail to address the full range of relevant policy criteria, the council may be left with no alternative but to refuse the grant of planning permission. It should be recognised that the site has only been identified for local uses commensurate with its size and location.

***Role of the plan:***

The submitted statement makes reference to landowner aspirations; and questions the role that any future user of the site may play in promoting future waste uses at Pickpit Hill. In response, it is important to stress that the role of the Site Allocations DPD is not fettered by the commercial interests of the landowner and / or potential future users of the site. To do so would go beyond the scope of due planning process.

Detailed decisions in relation to future users of the sites and / or future uses will be a matter for a subsequent planning application process.

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**Public Participation**

**Question from Mr Martyn Harvey, No2Waste group**  
**Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission**  
**Arrangements (Item 7)**

**Question**

The site at Castle Down Business park was highlighted as the preferred waste transfer site, as this is now longer preferred which site now is the preferred ?

**Response**

With the proposed deletion of the Castledown Business Park allocation from the Plan, the council consider that the following sites could, subject to a robust planning application process, accommodate a Waste Transfer use in the east and south of the county:

**East Wiltshire:**

- Pickpit Hill, Tidworth;
- Hopton Industrial Estate, Devizes;
- Salisbury Road Business Park, Marlborough;

**South Wiltshire:**

- CB Skip Hire, Salisbury;
- The former Imerys Quarry, Quidhampton, Salisbury;
- The employment allocation at Mere;
- Brickworth Quarry, near Whiteparish.

All the above sites, other than the CB Skip Hire at Salisbury, are for local rather than strategic scale waste facilities.

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4 August 2011

Minerals & Waste Policy,  
Spatial Planning, Economy and Enterprise  
Wiltshire Council, County Hall  
Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge,  
Wiltshire BA14 8JD

Dear Sirs

**Wiltshire & Swindon Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)**

We have viewed the above document and note Castledown Business Park, Ludgershall, and Pickpit Hill, Tidworth are listed as viable sites for waste management facilities (WMFs). In our opinion both sites are unsuitable for such use.

Therefore, we wish to make the following comments regarding the soundness of their selection in the Waste Site Allocations DPD:

(NB: References have been made to Hills Waste Solutions (HWS) and their outlining planning application to build a waste transfer station on the Castledown Business Park. Although not part of the Waste Site Allocations DPD the plans have highlighted the impact WMFs will create)

**Impact on human health, safety and amenities:**

- Firstly, WMFs will impact on human health and amenities on these sites due to their close proximity to the prestigious new Wellington Academy, its playing fields, existing/future B1 class businesses and existing/future planned residential areas. This will be detrimental to the Academy and the health and safety of its students; detrimental to the B1 class businesses; and detrimental to the residential areas
- Waste will attract flies, vermin and other creatures thus creating health hazards and nuisance for occupants of neighbouring sites. When coupled with air pollutants containing a cocktail of volatile organic compounds, dust, chemical sprays (inc. odour control sprays and insecticides) and traffic emissions, this will impact on human health, especially for those suffering from bronchial and skin complaints.
- Mitigation measures to increase the hedgerows and tree lines may not be sufficient protection for immediate neighbours (i.e. Academy students, existing B1 class and future businesses, and existing/future residents).
- NB: The Drummond Park housing development site is less than 150m from Castledown Business Park.
- Prevailing winds will blow odours, dust, fumes and litter across Ludgershall. Older residents of the town recall the landfill operation in the early 1970s, when the railway cutting near Pickpit Hill was in-filled. Pungent odours regularly wafted across Ludgershall and reached as far as Faberstown.

- Although the HWS proposal would mean waste would be stored in a large warehouse the doors would have to be opened for vehicular access and exit. At peak times it would be impractical to keep opening and shutting doors because the frequency of traffic would be too great. So odours, dust etc would escape into the atmosphere.
- The Waste Site Selection & Site Appraisal Methodology Document (SSAM) dated August 2009 clearly states under Appendix D "...assess suitability for development against: the physical and environmental constraints on development, including existing and proposed neighbouring land uses" and "to avoid detrimental impact on land in or allocated for B1 employment uses".
- Under Appendix E: Exclusionary Objectives: "To avoid development that would lead to impacts on human health" where indicators are proximity to residential areas, schools and associated land/playing fields, proximity to urban businesses and proximity to concentrations of urban development.
- NB: SSAM Appendix E, Discretionary objective 5: "To minimize potential detrimental impacts of nuisance (vermin, pests, litter...)" and Discretionary objective 4: "To minimize potential detrimental impacts of odour, dust and fumes."
- Increased noise and vibration from RCV, LGV and HGV traffic will impact on immediate neighbours, i.e. the Academy students, occupants of existing B1 class and future businesses, and existing/future residents.
- NB: SSAM Appendix E, discretionary objective 3: "To minimize detrimental impacts related to noise and vibration."
- The HWS plan for a WTS at Castledown shows peak traffic movements will coincide with the Wellington Academy opening and leaving times impacting on students' safety.
- Any attempt by HWS to rearrange their timetable would not be practical as collection vehicles must start at a given time in the morning and will have to travel further to offload. Also, the Academy has a long working day from early in the morning to the evening hours. Thus, there will be people coming and going throughout the whole day.

**Economic/Employment impact:**

- The Castledown Business Park is intended for innovative businesses and enterprises.
- Existing B1 class businesses on the site will almost certainly relocate if the site is formally adopted for WMF use. Several, including a catering company, have already stated they would relocate if HWS built a WTS on the site.
- There are currently in excess of 70 people employed either on site or as a direct result of the businesses now located at Fitz Gilbert Court, the first phase of the Park's development in an area of similar size planned for the WTS. By comparison, the WTS would only employ a small fraction of people locally as most of the 30 personnel would be existing employees of HWS. This small but crucial employment site cannot be 'wasted' by granting permission for this proposed WTS that promises to deliver minimal local employment.
- Future businesses from most sectors would be deterred from moving onto a site formally adopted for WMF use, impacting on future employment opportunities and development of the business park itself. For example: a local coach company, previously interested in moving onto the park, has recently

been approached to establish if the proprietor still wishes to relocate. However, although it is still a consideration, he would not contemplate moving if the site is formally adopted as suitable for WMFs.

- If adopted a precedent would be set for similar undesirable industries to move onto the site.
- As the Pickpit Hill site comprises mature woodland and undeveloped grass land, the cost of developing this site and providing access is likely to be prohibitive.
- NB: SSAM Appendix D: Economic: “In deciding which sites and areas to identify for waste management facilities, waste planning authorities should assess their suitability for development against the physical and environmental constraints on development, including existing and proposed neighbouring land uses.” Discretionary: “To avoid detrimental impacts on land in or allocated for B1 employment uses.”
- The Draft Core Strategy document puts a primary emphasis on creating jobs within principal settlements and market towns. Tidworth and Ludgershall are included in the Market Towns list in Core Strategy Policy 1.
- Para 5.15.3: “Castledown Business Park is an important allocation that will fulfil the employment requirements of Tidworth/Ludgershall in the short and medium term.”
- The HWS proposal would mean extra travelling distances for RCVs and kerbside collection vehicles. This would incur additional fuel and labour costs. It would also increase carbon emissions. NB: Policy WDC11: Sustainable Transportation of Waste: “Minimize transport distances, reduce carbon emissions...”

#### **Biodiversity and Cultural Heritage:**

- Pickpit Hill and Windmill Hill are chalk grassland habitats supporting wildlife including butterflies, brown hare, badgers, bats, and reptiles, including grass snakes and slow worms. Castledown Business Park borders land which creates a green corridor for this wildlife. Waste operations nearby would impact on wildlife.
- The Old Castle heritage site in Ludgershall is downwind of the two proposed waste sites and could be harmed by air pollution.
- Collingbourne Woods, an ancient woodland, is situated to the north east of the sites and vulnerable to air pollution.
- Mitigation measures to increase the hedgerows and tree lines may not be sufficient protection for the ancient woodland, the Old Castle and wildlife
- Waste will attract flies, vermin and other creatures which will require mitigation and control measures, i.e. poisons and insecticides. When coupled with air pollutants containing a cocktail of volatile organic compounds, dust, chemical sprays, and traffic emissions, this will impact on wildlife and domestic animals roaming the area.
- NB: Policy WDC8: Biodiversity and Geological Interest and Policy WDC9: Cultural Interest
- NB: <http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=973> and <http://planetearth.nerc.ac.uk/news/story.aspx?id=510> re rat poison impact on owls and hedgehogs respectively [Appendices 1a & 1b]

### **Water Environment:**

- Both Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill overlie a major aquifer and there are potential contamination issues to ground water and water supplies.
- Whilst mitigation measures can be introduced to reduce the risk of contamination to the underlying major aquifer there will always be a degree of risk which is unacceptable.
- [NB: Policy WDC3: Water Environment](#)

### **Transport/Location:**

- There are many traffic and congestion issues in Ludgershall and Tidworth already. The volume and timing of traffic indicated by Hill Waste Solutions in their outlining plans for a WTS on the Castledown Business Park will exacerbate the existing traffic issues.
- The existing traffic problems areas are primarily:
  1. Butt Street corner– difficult for lorries to negotiate
  2. The Memorial junction/Prince of Wales – lorries negotiating between parked vehicles
  3. Mid High Street – parking each side and the narrow carriageways mean only small cars can use both lanes at same time; a lorry takes up both lanes
  4. Ludgershall Road in Tidworth is frequently single lane due to roadside parking and the steep incline adds to negotiating difficulties
  5. The steep railway bridge in Ludgershall in adverse/winter weather conditions
  6. Tidworth Hill in adverse/winter weather conditions
  7. Roadside parking along A342 Andover Road, especially near Bell Street
  8. Tesco and Co-Op – large delivery vehicles, bus stops, coaches, zebra crossing and shoppers all converge on this small length of the Andover Road
  9. Bus Stops: one opposite the Car Park and the other near Biddesden Lane – when buses are stopped vision is restricted making it extremely difficult for other traffic to pass
  10. Future issues surrounding the impact of increased traffic on local roads when Drummond Park, and possibly Granby Gardens and the Empress Way expansion are developed.
- LGV/HGV/RCVs will have particular problems negotiating 4, 5 & 6; especially in adverse/winter weather conditions as snow and ice on the steep inclines make the roads treacherous, and often impassable.
- Sites should avoid impacting on residential roads. The A342 has in excess of 150 drains and manhole covers along the Andover Road through Ludgershall that regularly collapse under the current flow of heavy vehicular traffic. The type and volume of traffic suggested by the HWS plan would exacerbate the problem.
- [NB: SSAM Appendix E: Discretionary: “Avoid locations that access through residential areas and sensitive land.”](#)
- Based on the figures supplied by HWS there will be congestion problems at peak times, estimated one vehicle every 2 minutes when it takes 3-4 minutes to clear a weighbridge. This will create a backlog of traffic which will build up on the A3026. A similar backlog has been witnessed at peak times (around

2.30pm) on the A30 generated by vehicle movements accessing the existing Thorny Down site.

- MRFs are suggested as possible uses for both sites. However, MRFs are generally considered ‘strategic’ operations which should be within 16km of a Strategically Significant City or Town, e.g. Salisbury.
- The WTS operation plans by HWS would bring waste from South Wiltshire which can only be regarded as a ‘strategic’ operation as the waste is generated from a large geographical area outside East Wiltshire, and, therefore, is not ‘local’.
  1. Waste sites should be as close to the primary source of waste (i.e. SSCT of Salisbury) to **minimize transport distances and COST**
  2. Thorny Down is ideally situated for strategic operations as it is within 16km of the SSCT of Salisbury
- NB: Policy WCS2: “Strategic waste site allocations will be located as close as practicable (**within 16km**) to SSCTs (Strategically Significant City or Town) of **Swindon**, Chippenham, Trowbridge and **Salisbury** as identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy of the South West. Waste sites situated outside of these areas will be local-scale allocations to serve the demonstrable needs of the local area only....In the interests of achieving the objectives of sustainable development, priority will be given to proposals for new waste management developments that demonstrate a commitment to utilising the most appropriate haulage routes within and around the Plan area and implement sustainable modes and methods for transporting waste materials.”
- The HWS plan for a WTS has highlighted the impact traffic from WMFs would have at peak times and combined with the additional associated costs is unsustainable.
- If Pickpit Hill is adopted the traffic will be diverted away from Tidworth and routed along the A342, impacting on Ludgershall’s residential roads, through to Weyhill and the Hundred Acre Roundabout on the edge of Andover to join the A303. There would be a cross-boundary impact on Hampshire and travel distances lengthened. This is contrary to [Policy WDC11](#).

#### **Major fire risks:**

- Waste is subject to spontaneous combustion, especially organic decomposing waste which can reach temperatures of up to 160°F.
- Ref: [NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources – Waste Management - Emergency/Disaster Site – Spontaneous Combustion Guidance \[Appendix 2\]](#)
- Such a major fire so close to residential areas, an academy and businesses is potentially a serious health and economic risk.
- Examples of spontaneous fires at waste sites (we can provide other examples):
  1. Major fire at HWS site at Chapel Hill, Blunsdon on 26 May 2011
  2. Thirsk Waste Management Depot on 3 May 2011
  3. Colnbrook MRF on 15 May 2009
  4. Birmingham Waste Transfer Station on 15 July 2007
  5. Kirkstall Road Transfer Loading Station, Leeds on 11 September 2002[\[Appendices 3a-3e\]](#)

- Waste sites are subject to arson attacks. Ref: “Spate of fires at waste sector over Bank Holiday” headline May 2011 on [www.letsrecycle.com](http://www.letsrecycle.com) website [Appendix 4]
- Waste could include hazardous materials like asbestos, paints, and chemicals which pose fire and pollution risks.
- NB: Extract from the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations on the Environment Agency website: **“There is a human health issue that has been identified to be of primary concern, which is the exposure of the public to releases from serious incidents such as fires and unforeseen chemical reactions.”** [Appendix 5]

### **Character:**

#### Castledown Business Park:

- Out of character with the original plan to attract innovative businesses to the Castledown Business Park
- Detrimental to existing businesses and a deterrent to all future businesses
- Sets undesirable precedent for similar undesirable industries to move onto the business park

#### Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill:

- Totally out of character and appearance with the surrounding area impacting on amenities, safety and quality of life.
- Pickpit Hill is now vegetated with woodland and a UK BAP priority habitat which should be preserved
- NB: Policy WDC7: Conserve Landscape Character: **“Proximity to settlements must safeguard their character, setting and rural amenity.”**

### **Other sites:**

- We need to know why Solstice Park, Pickpit Hill and Everleigh are still included in the document when we have been given the impression the first was unavailable and the latter two unsuitable
- The lease for Everleigh runs out in 2016 but the DPD takes the County’s strategy plan to 2026. Does this mean the lease can be renewed?
- We also understood Everleigh could not be expanded. However, under ‘Biodiversity and Geodiversity’ for Everleigh in the Site Allocations DPD it states “Any expansion on the site is unlikely to impact on the Ancient Woodland...” It is unclear why this statement is there if expansion is out of the question.
- In our opinion Solstice Park is ideally situated for WMFs as it has immediate access to the A303 and impact on residential roads is minimal. In this respect its inclusion in the DPD is sound.
- The inclusion of Thorny Down is also sound as it is already fully operational, has good access to the A30 and is located away from residential areas, schools and existing businesses and will not impact on immediate neighbours.

### **SCI/Localism:**



- The Petition opposing the proposal for a WTS by HWS on the Castledown Business Park was signed by over 1000 local residents and demonstrates the strength of local opinion regarding the location of WMFs in such close proximity to the Academy, businesses and residential areas.
- The views of local people [supported by the SCI (Statement of Community Involvement) and the forthcoming Localism Bill] should carry proper weight before a decision is made to proceed any further with these proposals.

We also wish to express our disappointment that the previous consultations were not adequately publicized. Most of the general public in this area were unaware the Waste Site Allocation selection process had been under review since 2006. We now know the Council would have advertised each public consultation in the local press. However, not everyone buys the local newspapers, and, of those who do, hardly anyone studies the Council notices.

After discussing this issue with Geoff Wilmslow at the consultation on 20 July we appreciate it would be expensive to notify each householder individually. However, we understand the Council is paying in the region of £25,000 for 192,000 copies of the “Your Wiltshire” magazine which is delivered free to almost every household in the county. If the earlier waste allocation consultations were published in this magazine they should have been more prominent and eye catching. The magazine is the ideal vehicle to reach everyone without incurring extra costs.

It is regrettable the DPD reached its final consultation before we had the opportunity to comment on the sites in our area. Council officials have obviously spent a great deal of time preparing the document and consulting other bodies. Sadly, it did not, until now, reach the attention of local people who will be the ones to suffer the greatest impact should the sites be formally adopted for WMF use.

Whilst we recognize there is a need for waste sites we do not agree with locating operations like waste transfer stations, materials recovery facilities, inert waste recycling, composting, etc. so close to residential areas, schools and businesses. By their very nature these waste operations should be located away from populated areas where the impact is minimized.

### **Policies and Guidelines:**

There are many policies and guidelines in place to justify our concerns and comments. We have already mentioned and quoted from some of these but would like to draw your attention to a few others we consider relevant:

Policy WDC2 addresses the need to reduce impacts associated with issues such as amenity, visual aspects, noise and light emissions, vibration, transport, air emissions and climate change, the water environment and contaminated land.

In the W&S Waste Development Control Policies DPD adopted September 2009 under section 3, Managing the Impacts of Waste Management Development, quote:

1. The Environment: “...Options for sustainable transportation should be encouraged in order to reduce the impacts of transporting waste through Wiltshire and Swindon. Protect human health from adverse impacts.”

2. WDC11: Transportation of Waste: "...Minimizing transportation distances, minimizing the production of carbon emissions.....Consider the potential cross boundary impacts and cumulative impacts of the development with other local developments."
3. 5.3: "Sites will not be encouraged where access is required through residential areas."
4. **3.3: "The avoidance of impacts refers to the need to prevent impacts happening in the first place."**

**Conclusion:**

The cumulative impacts we have identified question the soundness and sustainability of including Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill within the Waste Site Allocation DPD. The following list from the Waste Site Allocations Sustainability Appraisal Objectives summarizes most, if not all, of the concerns we have raised:

1. To protect human health and well-being of people living and working in Wiltshire and Swindon as well as visitors to the Plan area;
2. Promote stronger more vibrant communities;
3. Give people in the county access to satisfying work opportunities;
4. Balance the need for growth with the protection of the environment;
5. Encourage more sustainable transport and reduce the impacts of transport;
6. Protect and enhance biodiversity;
7. Promote the conservation and wise use of land;
8. Protect and enhance landscape and townscape;
9. Maintain and enhance cultural and historic assets;
10. Ensure adequate measures are in place to adapt to the impacts of climate change;
11. Reduce greenhouse emissions; and
12. Minimize land, water, air, light, noise and genetic pollution.

We trust you will consider our comments and review the soundness of the inclusion of these two sites in the Wiltshire & Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD.

Kindly acknowledge receipt of this letter and confirm that our comments have been noted.

Yours faithfully

Anna Greenwood (Mrs)  
on behalf of the no2waste campaign group

Mr R A Greenwood

Minerals & Waste Policy  
Spatial Planning, Economy and Enterprise  
Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge  
Wilts BA14 8JD

4 August 2011

Dear Sirs

**Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Continuation of Comments  
Re: Everleigh Site & Thorny Down**

As the Everleigh and Thorny Down sites are currently in use as Waste Transfer Stations it would seem appropriate to continue this function. However, in the above DPD their potential uses have omitted WTS use.

We have been given the indication the leases/permits for waste management facilities at these sites will expire in 2016. Has any attempt been made since the consultation/exhibition by Hills Waste Solutions on 6 June 2011 to extend the leases/permit? I ask this question because it was posed at the 6 June meeting and warrants an explanation. The DPD should appraise sites suitable for waste management facility use up to 2026, so it is confusing to see these sites in the document if they can no longer be used after 2016.

I and many other people cannot understand why this was not apparently considered before, nor can we understand why expansion of these sites had not been pursued.

Obviously, if these sites are still suitable for WTS operations then the recent consultation/proposal by HWS to build a WTS at Castledown Business Park would be totally unjustified; especially as the CBP site has never been used for waste management facilities, whereas Everleigh and Thorny Down are already operational.

I conclude that Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill should be removed from the DPD as their inclusion is unsound. I also conclude that attempts should be made to prolong the activities at Everleigh and Thorny Down to at least 2026, making their inclusion in the DPD sound; and they should also be considered suitable for WTS operations.

Please acknowledge receipt of my comments and provide answers to my questions. Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

**Roger A Greenwood**  
Resident of Ludgershall

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

17 January 2012

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## Public Participation

### Response to the Statements and Questions from Mr and Mrs Greenwood on behalf of the NO2Waste Campaign Group

#### Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission Arrangements (Item 7)

#### Pickpit Hill

#### Comments / questions

There are some changes to the details on Pickpit Hill since the consultation DPD last year which are puzzling:

- The underlying aquifer is no longer described as **‘major aquifer of high vulnerability’**. Instead it is now simply described as **‘a principle aquifer’**. Why, is it suddenly not of **‘high vulnerability’** any more?
- Text that stated there was **‘no mains surface water sewers in close proximity’** has been replaced with text stating **‘foul water discharges from any development can be connected to the public sewer system where available...’** Can we assume the Beech Hill area in Tidworth would be the site of the nearest main sewer and how costly would it be to run a pipeline that distance?
- Under ‘Cumulative Effects’ the statement **‘Potential for cumulative effects on air quality, human health and amenity, traffic and transportation’** has been replaced with **‘No cumulative effects identified at the plan-making stage’**. Can we have an explanation, please?

Whilst these changes may seem relatively insignificant one gets the impression it is an exercise to soften the potential impacts from waste management facilities (WMF), and make the site appear more viable than it actually is, to the reader.

#### **Response**

The amendments made to the plan (and referenced above) in relation to aquifer terminology have been made to address comments raised by The Environment Agency during the pre-submission consultation. The changes focus on changes to the terminology used to describe aquifers set out in Environment Agency policy (GP3) and thereby the site profiles in the latest plan present the most up to date information.

In terms of the comment in relation to connectivity to foul water drainage systems, the proposed amendment to wording is again a result of comments received at the pre-submission stage. However, for the purposes of clarity, it is suggested that

additional wording be added to the **Water Environment** section of the plan to fully establish the scope of the assessment work required to support any subsequent planning application. The wording would therefore read (7<sup>th</sup> sentence):

**The assessment will need to ensure that** foul water discharges from any development can be connected to the public sewer system, where available, subject to a capacity appraisal and agreement upon a point of connection.

With respect the issue of cumulative effects, there would appear to be some confusion over how this element of the plan has been drafted. The cumulative effects assessment considered the impact of cumulative effects with other waste site allocations within the plan, rather than a combination of environmental factors. With the allocation at Castledown Business Park proposed for removal from the draft plan, the cumulative effect of **two** waste facilities operating in the Ludgershall / Tidworth area is effectively removed.

### **Comment / question**

The potential impact on the A303 is now recognized in the text. This is also a cross-boundary matter and is particularly relevant because it is suggested all traffic should be diverted away from Tidworth travelling to and from the site via the A3026, A342 and A303 crossing the Wiltshire/Hampshire border. It also lengthens travelling distances considerably adding to cost and carbon emissions.

All traffic would travel the length of Tidworth Rd and Andover Road in Ludgershall which are primarily residential areas so would be contrary to policy.

When Castledown Business Park (CBP) was considered for WMF the volume of traffic argument was countered by the fact there would have always been a certain amount of traffic generated from the park when full developed. We must now reconsider the traffic issue as there will be an increase in traffic when CBP coupled with the major housing schemes in the area, i.e. Eastern Quadrant, Tidworth and Drummond Park, Ludgershall, are fully developed. Any WMF on Pickpit Hill will exacerbate the traffic issues.

### **Response**

The assessment work undertaken by the council in preparation of the draft plan identified a range of highway matters to be addressed through any subsequent planning application process. The draft plan presents the findings of the initial transport assessments and sets out indicative design standards for access/ egress. In addition, it [*the plan*] also identifies the requirement for a full Transport Assessment (TA) to be prepared in support of any subsequent planning application. Matters in relation to potential cumulative highway impacts associated with planned housing and employment development in the area will need to be addressed through the application and TA process.

### **Comment / question**

Given Pickpit Hill's highly elevated position on a hill top any development would be notably visible when viewed from the east despite surrounding trees. This would greatly harm the character and appearance of the area.

### **Response**

Again, based upon the evidence gathered through the site assessments undertaken to date, it is the view of the council that the proposed site is currently well screened by existing vegetation. Clearly, further assessment and mitigation work would be requested at any subsequent planning application stage.

### **Everleigh\Thorny Down**

#### **Comments / questions**

The questions relating to permit extensions up to 2036 (Hills planning applications in 2007, K/56792/WCC and S/2007/8008 respectively) for WTS operations at Thorny Down and Everleigh have never been answered (questions originally raised by R Greenwood in his letter dated 4 August 2011 and at an Area Board meeting on 19 September 2011):

- Why have WTS operations been removed from Everleigh's potential uses when the permit for this use was extended to 2036?
- Why have the landowners of Thorny Down changed their plans for the site when there were no objections to the WTS permit extension use up to 2036?

As Everleigh is still in the DPD we presume the lease can be extended beyond 2016. Also, in the DPD under 'Biodiversity and Geodiversity' expansion on the site is considered. Obviously, expansion has not been ruled out for this site. This means the site could potentially be expanded to accommodate operations like MRF/WTS etc instead of Pickpit Hill, which is too close to the Academy and residential areas, whereas Everleigh is in a more suitable location.

- Why has this not been considered in more depth?

### **Response**

The issue of lease arrangements have been investigated and discussions are ongoing between the MoD and the council's Waste Management Service. Thorny Down and Everleigh currently operate as Waste Transfer Stations and, as such, there is no need in the draft plan to allocate these sites. Their continued and/or expanded use can be determined through the renewal of lease arrangements and the planning application process. The draft plan is intended to provide opportunity and choice for waste uses to come forward, as such and given that there are no overriding constraints to the development of Pickpit Hill it should be retained as an allocation.

## **Strategic/Local**

### **Comments and questions**

The criteria used to determine Strategic and Local operations is unclear and open to interpretation. This was profoundly apparent when Hills Waste Solutions planned a WTS operation at Castledown Business Park, in **East Wiltshire**, to handle waste from **South Wiltshire**:

- How binding is the 16 km recommendation for the location of Strategic sites from SSCTs?
- Is there a clear definition of Strategic and Local operations, e.g. scale of operation in tonnage, area deemed local within how many km radius, etc?
- MRF's are generally classed as Strategic operations so why is it one of the potential uses for Pickpit Hill?

### **Response**

The definition of 'strategic' and 'local' scale was never designed to be complex. The concept stems from draft Regional Spatial Strategy policy and was designed to direct larger scale development towards the main centres of growth (ie within 16 kilometres of the main towns across Wiltshire and Swindon). Any development falling outside of these catchment areas would then only ever be considered as offering local-scale support to the overall waste sites network.

It is not appropriate to set tonnage thresholds to the definitions of strategic and local-scale development. Waste facilities can, and do operate, at various different scales depending upon the type of material being processed and the choice of technology being employed. It is perfectly reasonable to assume that a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), for example, could operate at a local or a strategic scale. However, the current adopted waste policy framework seeks to ensure that a strategic-scale MRF would be located as close as practicable (and within 16 km) of Chippenham, Trowbridge, Swindon and Salisbury.

## **Public Awareness**

### **Comments and questions**

We are concerned about the very limited time given for the public and interested groups to raise questions and statements for 17 Jan meeting.

- How are they meant to know when it will be on the agenda for one of these meetings when the topic has been deferred twice?

Most of the general public have been totally unaware of the earlier consultations because it was poorly publicized. It is extremely regrettable that they were denied the opportunity to comment from the very beginning of the consultation process. Due process has not been given.



## **Response**

The process of preparing the draft Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD has been undertaken in accordance with legislative and local policy requirements. All consultation activity, dating as far back as the creation of the Waste Forum (2005), has been undertaken in accordance with legal requirements and, more recently, the councils Statements of Community Involvement (SCIs). All Parish Councils across Wiltshire and Swindon (and adjoining) have been actively consulted throughout the process.

## **General**

### **Comments / questions**

- Is it possible at this stage to amend the intended uses for a site in the DPD before 7 February meeting?
- Why has Solstice Park been removed from the list?
- Where will Hills locate their WTS for South Wilts waste? \*

[\* It is noted:

1. A new deliverable **strategic** site has been identified at 20 Mills Way, Boscombe Business Park, Amesbury (Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations - Appendix B)
2. Imery's Quarry at Quidhampton has the potential for WTS operations and is within 16km of Salisbury
3. The site at Mere has the potential for WTS operations]

## **Response**

**Bullet Point 1** – the plan has been presented to Cabinet for consideration and approval. Councillors may consider and recommend amendments be made to the draft plan before it is presented to full council (7 February).

**Bullet Point 2** – Solstice Business Park has been removed on the basis that the landowner no longer wishes to see any form of waste use on the land.

**Bullet Point 3** – that is a matter for Hills to determine.

## **Conclusion**

The no2waste campaign group consider the inclusion of Pickpit Hill in the Waste Site Allocations DPD is unsound. Our reasons are more explicitly detailed in the group's letter dated 4 August 2011 (ref: ZW725762682GB), copy attached.

The inclusion of Everleigh is considered sound and has the potential for expansion to accommodate the operations intended for Pickpit Hill on a local scale.

If Pickpit Hill must be included in the DPD its potential use should be limited to HRC as this would be less damaging to public amenities and quality of life than any of the other operations listed.



**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mrs Nicky Bamford on**

**Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD – Proposed Submission  
Arrangements (Item 7)**

**Statement**

As a resident of Ludgershall therefore affected by these proposals and having been a member of the No 2 waste campaign, I am most concerned that the Pickpit Hill site remains in the document. Pickpit Hill is still listed with the following potential uses: materials recovery facility, waste transfer station (WTS) , inert waste recycling/transfer, composting, local recycling and household recycling centre and the suggestion has been made that traffic is diverted away from Tidworth through Ludgershall along the A342 to join the A303. This is wholly unacceptable. The highways in Ludgershall barely cope with the current traffic volume with significant issues around the Castle corner and the memorial junction.

With the proposed development at Drummond Park becoming a reality in the next 2 years, producing in excess of an extra 500 vehicles in the town, it will make travelling anywhere around the area extremely difficult. I have lived on the main Andover Road in Ludgershall for 24 years and have accepted that traffic will be a major aspect of that residency, however, in the last 10 years the traffic volume has increased to such an extent that a wait of 7 -10 minutes to get out of my drive in the mornings is not unusual. You may think this an exaggeration as 10 minutes is a long time, but I have timed it! There is a constant stream of traffic past the end of our drive; we are lucky to have off road parking, whereas the residents of Bell street park their cars and vans out on the main road, the number of which is ever increasing, resulting in major congestion at that point. If this road was included in the plan for waste it would be a disaster for the towns residents.

The objections to the site at Pickpit hill are well documented in the previous submission which resulted in the removal of Castledown Business Park from the Waste site allocations document and I am at a loss to understand why Pickpit remains, particularly as it's proximity to CBP is within a half mile.

## Response

The assessment work undertaken by the council in preparation of the draft plan identified a range of highway matters to be addressed through any subsequent planning application process. The draft plan identifies the requirement for a full Transport Assessment (TA) to be prepared in support of any subsequent planning application. Matters in relation to potential cumulative highway impacts associated with planned housing and employment development in the area will need to be addressed through the application and TA process.

The level of objections received during the last round of consultation (June 2011) was not the primary reason for the removal of Castledown Business Park (CBP). The Castledown Business Park site at Ludgershall has been removed from the plan for the reasons summarised in the Cabinet Report (paragraphs 13 to 15). These are repeated for ease of reference below.

- “13. *In terms of the level of objection received, the majority of concerns related to the proposals at Ludgershall (Castledown Business Park and Pickpit Hill). The majority of these objections were generated by a community organised petition, signed by 399 people. The main issues presented were concerned with the impact of waste development on the local community and the surrounding land uses that have been developed since the site was first proposed back in 2005. In particular, concerns were raised regarding Castledown Business Park related to the proximity of Wellington Academy, scale of operation in terms of vehicle movement (road safety, congestion issues), low level of employment generated by waste uses and support for the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy that identifies Castledown Business Park as a Principal Employment Area, where activities falling within use classes B1, B2 and B8 are promoted. This called into question the suitability of the use of this site for waste management facilities.*
14. *It should also be noted that, during the final round of consultation, Cabinet Capital Assets Committee on 14 June 2011 agreed that the Council purchase Castledown Business Park to help stimulate regeneration opportunities in the area accordance with Council’s Corporate Plan. The Corporate Plan focuses on delivery of new jobs across Wiltshire.*
15. *These factors have been fully considered and as result the Castledown Business Park site has been removed from the plan.”*

The landowner of Pickpit Hill (MoD) has consistently maintained support for keeping the site in the plan. As such, and unlike the position at CBP, the proposed allocation is therefore considered to be deliverable and appropriate for inclusion within the plan, subject to a robust planning application process. The site has only been identified for local uses commensurate with the size and location of the site.



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**WILTSHIRE and SWINDON Proposed Submission  
Draft WASTE SITE ALLOCATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN (DPD)**

**An Objection from**

**CHITTERNE PARISH COUNCIL**

**August 2011**

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Appendices

**Appendix 1** Photographs of the site and its setting within the rural environment.

**Appendix 2** Inaccuracies found in the Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, *Atkins May 2010*

**1.0 Introduction:** This objection to the inclusion in the Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan of the Chitterne Waste Management Facility is drafted by Chitterne Parish Council, following consultation with the villagers of Chitterne. The relevant minute reference concerning the position of Chitterne Parish Council on any further development of the Chitterne Waste Management Facility site is as follows - **300/54, meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011.**

1.1 Chitterne Parish Council's objections to the Waste Local Plan are outlined in this report and are founded, in the main, on evidence in reports commissioned by Wiltshire Council itself in pursuance of the development plans, which clearly demonstrate the unique unsuitability of Chitterne as a site for local household waste transfer, processing and/or disposal. This evidence has either been overlooked, ignored or misrepresented in the current development plan. Several Chitterne residents have addressed specific aspects of the proposal in separate submissions to the Planning Inspector, these responses should be considered in conjunction with these Parish Council observations. I refer particularly to the submissions of D. Robinson, A. Hutchinson and J Smedley.

1.2 Concern that the proposals presented in the present report are unsound, since they are based on flawed evidence, or ignore evidence which casts doubt on the issues of traffic safety, landscape and visual amenity, bio - and geo-diversity, historic environment and cultural heritage, human health and amenity and the water environment. Further, we shall draw attention to inaccuracies within the data presented, which, while they do not, in themselves, invalidate the proposals, do cast significant doubts on the integrity of the process followed thus far.

1.3 The landfill site at some point has been renamed the the 'Chitterne Waste Management Facility' – this is misleading and implies that a great deal more waste processes are/could, being/be carried out at the site, see quote below. The site is in fact only an inert landfill site as it is an agricultural improvement scheme to make farming of a steep sided valley safer (letter from Planning Inspectorate ref: T/APP/F3925/A/90/160383/P6 07 March 1991).

The site under question is **not** currently part of the 'waste management facility'. It is a large greenfield site (grade 3 agricultural) adjacent to the landfill.

An example of how the site has been misrepresented appears as 4.18 p 21 **'The allocation at Chitterne, whilst removed from any concentrations of population represents a suitable opportunity to maximise the efficient use of an existing and long term resource and waste management facility.....'** It should again be pointed out that, **..' the existing and long term resource'** is in fact an agricultural improvement scheme, that is using chalk, sub-soil and top-soil to fill in a valley to improve farm safety.



## 2.0 DETAILED RESPONSE

### 2.1 Traffic and Transportation

2.1.1 Chitterne Residents and the Parish Council have for over ten years been deeply concerned by the level of heavy traffic and the speed at which vehicles travel through the village. The village has a number of horses and riders that have to use the roads through the village to access the bridleways on the Plain. There are many children and young people who catch buses to the local schools and there is a large proportion of Senior Citizens, who use the Plain for exercise and dog-walking. The current weight and speed of traffic is intolerable and is eroding the quality of life for those living in Chitterne. The Police and Highways Authority have done little to address this issue, despite frequent representations by the Parish Council, the local councillor, M.P., individuals and groups living in the village. Access to the Chitterne inert Landfill site from the East is through the village and access from the West is from the A36. The junction at Knook Camp is a notorious Black Spot with a frightening accident rate<sup>1</sup>.

2.1.2 the Atkins Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, May 2010 commissioned by Wiltshire Council states: **'The village of Chitterne is subject to an 18T weight restriction, meaning that all vehicles should only route via the A36 to access the site'** (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins 2010 Appendix B p.646*) this is the baseline for selecting the site for further development. This is not enforceable according to Wiltshire police. The potential impact on the village of Chitterne as a result of increased lorry traffic, if the proposed development goes ahead, is totally unacceptable. The village is used as a rat run throughout the day and experiences a high volume of heavy and speeding traffic of all descriptions<sup>2</sup>.

2.1.3 There is no footway along the narrowest (approx 19') length of the B390. **'There is a 18T environmental weight restriction in the village of Chitterne, as well as on-street parking and narrow road widths (often less than 6 meters).** (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins 2010 Appendix B p.644*). This is extremely hazardous for pedestrians, cyclists, horseriders etc. Many residential properties have their access directly onto the B390 where there is limited visibility.

2.1.4 Villagers of Chitterne are reluctant to walk down the road to access the Imber Range Path (which uses the B390 to the west end of the village) due to the speed of vehicles that use the road as a cut through to avoid congestion on the A303. Vehicles that exceed the 18T weight restriction use the B390, at speed, to access the inert landfill site at the Chitterne Waste Management Facility. If the proposed development at Valley Farm goes ahead the traffic levels will potentially increase by a huge percentage as illustrated in the Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins May 2010 table B.4.9.6.1 P.643 - making use of the road even more dangerous to villagers<sup>3</sup>.

2.1.5 There is the major issue of community severance with many properties lying to the south of the B390, with village amenities including the recreation ground, three school bus stops, pub, church, footpaths and byways, located to the north of the road.

2.1.6 Overweight vehicles not only use the B390 to access the site but also use the undesignated road running through the village to the north, which links to the A360 north west of Tilshead. This is a very narrow road, densely populated and with a single width carriageway through the village of Chitterne at Townsend. If the proposed site development goes ahead then the effects on this area of Chitterne village must be taken into account, not just the B390<sup>4</sup>.

### *Footnotes to Section 2.*

<sup>1/2</sup>*The stretch of road from the lower entrance to Valley Farm through to Knook has also been the location of a number of traffic accidents over the last ten years, despite recent road improvements. Chitterne Parish Council has made a Freedom of Information request for statistics covering these accidents as well as statistics relating to the speeding offences recorded during a recent campaign of speed and vehicle weight monitoring through the 30mph limit in Chitterne village.*

<sup>3</sup>*At peak times during a Community Speed Watch check, traffic volumes exceeded more than 500 per hour. Any increase on these levels, given the inadequacy of the carriageway and the absence of pavements at key points, would render normal life in this part of the village almost impossible and extremely hazardous.*

<sup>4</sup>*Many of the dwellings located in the narrowest part of the road open directly on to the carriageway. Most are at least 100 years old, built on chalk with inadequate foundations to withstand damage from an increased level of heavy traffic.*

## **2. 2 Water Environment**

2.2.1 'The proposed development site is located on a major aquifer of high vulnerability. It is pointed out in the Atkins report that **'Given that the site lies on a principal aquifer and is close in proximity to a SPZ 1 for a public water supply source a high level of engineering containment will be required at this site to safeguard the groundwater environment.'** (p. 32 Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document)

2.2.2 The data and potential risks to the water environment directly relating to Chitterne Village are alarming. (Table B.4.9.7.1 Chitterne Waste Management Facility Water Environment Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins 2010 Appendix B).

Contamination of drinking water supply is stated as a potential risk if the proposed uses of the site are pursued. This is totally unacceptable.

**'The risk of impact on the Chitterne Brook flow as a result of increases in areas of hardstanding and runoff volumes during construction and operation.'**

2.2.3 There are many houses in Chitterne Village located very close to Chitterne Brook. Any processes that could result in the increase in flood risk to these homes is unacceptable. All potential uses as identified in the Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocation Development Plan Document would increase the risk of flooding of homes in Chitterne<sup>1</sup>.

2.2.4 It is quite incredible that despite all the findings of the Atkins Report the summary of site findings relating to Chitterne concludes that... **'Few/no significant issues identified'**. This is interesting when one compares the Summary and Site Findings for Warminster Business Park, which states: **'Several potentially significant issues identified..'** This is despite the fact that the Chitterne site is underlain by a primary aquifer.

**The risk of contamination of drinking water has been identified, the risk of flooding along Chitterne Brook has been identified<sup>2</sup>.**

The Warminster Business Park site in fact has less significant issues than the Chitterne site but this has been ignored in the summing up of data in the Atkins report. The report is therefore unsound in its use of data to inform any subsequent decision making process.

#### *Footnote to section 2.2*

<sup>1</sup>*The Chitterne Brook is a winterbourne, rising in late autumn and often running until early spring. Many of the springs feeding it rise from beneath dwellings in Townsend, often causing flooding affecting those dwellings, rendering septic tanks inoperable and in severe cases, flooding the road. Any increase in flows from the proposed site will result in back-ups which could seriously inundate the lower stories of several houses. Any discharge to the brook during the dry summer months will not be diluted and will therefore have a disproportionate impact.*

<sup>2</sup>*A more detailed critique on the impact of the proposed development on the water environment, bio and geo-diversity of Chitterne and its immediate surroundings is contained within the separate submission to the proposal by Amanda Hutchinson of St Mary's Lodge, Chitterne Aug 3 2011.*

## **2.3 Landscape, Townscape and Visual**

2.3.1 'The site is not allocated within the adopted West Wiltshire District Local Plan and the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy does not propose (sic) any designation in the area of the site.' (*Atkins – Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report Appendix B B.4.9.3 p.640*)

2.3.2 'The site is not local to any other settlements which makes it an unsuitable site for 'local recycling'.' There is little recognition of the closeness of the village of Chitterne to the proposed site<sup>1</sup>. The photographs contained within the Atkins report only show the proposed greenfield site from the location of the inert landfill. This does not indicate the scale of the site within the landscape nor the truly rural nature of the site or its placement within the surrounding rolling downland. The Atkins photographs seem to be being used to display the site in the most unflattering way ignoring the landscape setting completely, this is unacceptable and unhelpful. (See *photos attached as appendix 3 for a more accurate view of the site within its landscape setting.*) The proposed site is a large (15ha) GREENFIELD site, currently under pasture and is grade 3 agricultural land. The site is set in an area of open rolling chalk downland and is highly visible from the B390 from west and east. (Appendix 1)

2.3.3 The site has only become a 'waste site' as a result of the planning permission for an agricultural improvement scheme. It is currently used solely as a landfill site for the disposal of chalk and topsoil to inform the filling of the valley to 'make farming safer' (*Reference required*)

How can it follow that an agricultural improvement scheme can be used to promote the development and building of an industrial waste processing plant in such an open and beautiful landscape? The current agricultural improvement scheme will not have any long term visual impact as once the site is closed the land will be remodelled and grassed to fit in with the surrounding contours of the landscape. This will not be the case if the proposed uses of the site are given the go ahead. The processes of Materials Recovery/Waste Transfer, Local recycling, Composting and Waste Treatment will all need building and structures to contain the processes. This will have a major visual impact on the surrounding countryside. **'Potential for landscape and visual impacts on the surrounding area due to the highly visible site location'** (*Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document p. 32*)

2.3.4 'This is a c.15 hectare Greenfield site in an open, rural location that is designated as a Special Landscape Area. Its use for waste facilities would therefore contribute to the erosion of the countryside.' (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report Atkins, 2010 Appendix B table B.4.9.1 P.632*)  
The landscape quality and condition of site is described as HIGH by Atkins.

2.3.5 The site is described in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (Wiltshire County Council) as:

*Landscape Type: High Chalk Plain*

*Landscape Character Area: Salisbury Plain East*

Key characteristics relevant to the site:

Very large scale and open, exposed landscape

Rolling plateau land form with panoramic views over the surrounding lowlands creating a sense of elevation

2.3.6 It is stated that 'The overall management strategy is to conserve the open and isolated character of the plain along with the vast area of calcareous grass land and sites of historic interest'. (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins 2010 Appendix B table B.4.9.3 P.639*).

**The further development of the Chitterne Waste Management Facility is in conflict with this statement.**

## **2.4 Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage**

2.4.1 The proposed site is located within the proximity to a number of designations these include a number of scheduled ancient monuments in the area. The site is located in the vicinity Cranborne Chase AONB and the Salisbury Plain SPA, SAC and SSSI. The site is located within a South West strategic nature area and designated a Special Landscape Area (SLA). (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins 2010 Appendix B table B.4.9.1 P.632*)

2.4.2 The Greenfield site that is proposed for development of waste management facilities contains an 'extensive and undated field system which is likely to be associated with elements of the surrounding prehistoric to Roman period landscape.' (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report, Atkins 2010 Appendix B table B.4.9.2 P.633*)

It is highly likely that this field system is connected to the surrounding scheduled ancient monuments and forms part of the wider archaeological landscape. As such the field systems should be viewed as an integral part of the historic landscape, not isolated features.

**'The overall management strategy is to conserve the open and isolated character of the plain along with the vast area of calcareous grass land and sites of historic interest'. (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report Atkins, 2010 Appendix B table B.4.9.3 P.639*).**

**'Improvements to the Chitterne Waste Management Facility would involve and have the potential to impact on the heritage resource of the site and surrounding area.'** (*Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report Atkins 2010 Appendix B p.633*).

## **2.5 Bio-diversity and Other Ecological Impacts**

2.5.1 In an appraisal of the Valley Farm Waste Management Facility conducted by Wiltshire Council in October 2009, it was stated that: '*The Salisbury Plain SPA is approximately 1.3 km north of the site and a key interest feature of the site is the Stone Curlew. The HRA assessment identifies that significant adverse impacts for this species are most likely to arise from disturbance, noise and light in proximity to nesting and feeding sites.... Some protected species have also been recorded in proximity to the site*' (These include a large badger population, sand lizards and several rare species of butterflies and moths).

2.5.2 The same report goes on to state that: '*Site is Greenfield and there are a number of priority habitats within 2.5 km of the site. Ecological survey required*' and: '*Site is identified as an area of potential Chalk Downland in the Southwest Nature map. Development of this area would lead to loss of part of this designation*'.

2.5.3 Given that it is widely believed that calcareous wild chalk downlands are disappearing at a faster rate than the Amazon rain forest, **it is scarcely credible that the Wiltshire Council can seriously consider putting at risk such a fragile part of our environmental and cultural heritage, when other, suitable sites with less potential for serious damage exist within a relatively short distance.**

## **3.0 Conclusion**

3.1 In summary, drawing from the evidence gathered and presented by Wiltshire Council, or by their expert consultants commissioned to examine the feasibility and advisability of including the Greenfield site at Chitterne in a list of locations suitable for the development of, Local Waste Recycling, Materials Recovery Facility, Waste Transfer Station, Waste Treatment and Composting, Chitterne Parish Council submit that;

- ⤴ **Agricultural Improvement Scheme** - The Chitterne Waste Management Facility is an agricultural improvement scheme. Inert chalk and topsoil are being used to fill in a valley in order to reduce the steep sides to make farming safer. It should not be assumed that the adjacent Greenfield site is therefore suitable for other waste management processes. The name of the site is misleading and predisposes the site for additional uses for which it is highly unsuitable.
- ⤴ **Transport and Traffic.** The existing access roads are inadequate and dangerous to village road users under the present circumstances. Any development which increases the traffic through the village will only exacerbate the situation.
- ⤴ **Water environment.** The risk of contamination of drinking water has been identified, the risk of flooding along Chitterne Brook has been identified.
- ⤴ **Landscape, Townscape and Visual Amenity.** 'This is a Greenfield site in an open, rural location that is designated as a Special Landscape Area. Its use for waste facilities would therefore contribute to the erosion of the countryside.'  
(Atkins – Joint Waste Site Allocations Site Survey Report Appendix B table B.4.9.1 P.632).

- ⤴ **Historic Environment and Cultural Heritage.** Major archaeological and historic sites identified by the Wiltshire Council and other national authorities surround the site. The site forms an associated link between two scheduled ancient monuments. Any damage to this will result in a loss to the archaeological landscape as a whole.
- ⤴ **Bio-diversity and Other Ecological Impacts.** What is known is that a number of rare and valuable flora and fauna rely on the unspoiled nature of this unique part of Salisbury Plain. The effect on these species and their habitat of the proposed development is unknown, but likely to be adverse.
- ⤴ **Misuse of Information.** Despite all the major issues associated with the site that are highlighted in the Atkins report, Wiltshire Council in its summary (p.32 Wiltshire and Swindon Proposed Submission Draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document.) conclude that; **‘No cumulative effects identified at the plan-making stage.’**
- ⤴ **The 'Consultation' process.**  
Finally, we wish to protest strongly at the wholly inadequate process and quality of consultation followed by the Wiltshire Council. While we fully acknowledge the importance of developing a County-wide Waste Management strategy, we are unable to find any record of consultation with Chitterne Parish Council on the development of the current proposal since 2003. We have checked with a number of other Parish Councils affected by the plans and find they have a similar experience. While recognising Wiltshire Council's role in the development of a strategy, they must also recognise and respond to the role of Parish Councils in protecting the interests of their communities.

Taking into account all the above, Chitterne Parish Council have clearly demonstrated that;

**The proposed development of a Local Recycling Centre, Inert Waste/Transfer, Treatment, Materials Recovery Facility, Waste Transfer Station and Composting is entirely unsuitable for a Greenfield site in a highly visible rural location. Accessed by unsuitable roads with major concerns being raised relating to landscape effect, traffic, water safety and flooding and urge that the site be removed from any further consideration for the development of any additional waste management processes and as such, the site must be deselected from the Wiltshire and Swindon Draft Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD).**

**Appendix 3**  
**Inaccuracies in Joint Site Survey Report Appendix B, Atkins May 2010**

**Inconsistencies of Location of the Chitterne Site:**

p.61 'The site is located 1.5 km East of Chitterne village'.

p.632 B4.9.1'.....1km west of the village of Chitterne'.

p.633 'The site lies c. 2km to the west of the Chitterne Conservation Area'.

p.639 'Greenfield site located to the south west of the village of Chitterne on the B390.....'

p. 639 B4.9.5 'The site is located north of the B390 and approx 6km east of Chitterne Village.'

p.644 '.....over 2km from the nearest settlement (Chitterne).





**Public Participation**

**Statements and Questions from North Wiltshire and Swindon CPRE in relation to Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations DPD**

**Comments / questions**

Given that it has been necessary to drop some sites from the document, two of which were to be multi purpose and possibly include Waste Transfer Stations, on the grounds of non-deliverability due to landowner objection, will Wiltshire Council ensure that sites situated closest to the proposed areas of growth will be brought forward even if this means exercising Compulsory Purchase Powers and running counter to local business objection?

In the North of the county the greatest proposed growth is at Chippenham. The sites allocated in the document will need to meet this growth in order to remove the pressure from Lower Compton at Calne. A single centralised Waste Transfer Station is inefficient compared to local Waste Transfer Stations close to the SSTIs. Will Wiltshire Council ensure that multiple small planning permissions will be encouraged and facilitated as local handling of waste nearest to major roads and away from major residential areas is the greatest environmental and social consideration.

The extra mileage costs using a single centralised facility will be born by the transporters, principally Wiltshire Council, not the operator. The strategic shift in waste due to the phasing out of landfill has altered the operator chain and we ask the Council to ensure that the issues of excessive transportation and size of operation are guarded against and sites for regional or supra regional use are at locations which take into account these environmental and social elements and are not judged on purely historical and settled evidence.

**Response**

The strategic importance of Chippenham as node for future growth is fully acknowledged by Cabinet. In addition, with the scale of growth planned for the period up to 2026, the Cabinet also recognise the need to present a flexible framework of waste sites to address future waste arising from planned growth. The draft Waste Site Allocations DPD sets out a range of sites to the north (near Stanton St Quinton), south (Thingley Junction, Leafield Industrial Estate) and within Chippenham itself (Bumpers Farm Industrial Estate).

The sites being promoted have been assessed for their potential to accommodate a range of waste uses and thereby offer greater choice to local private and public waste collection services to manage waste in a sustainable manner. As sufficient

sites have been identified there is no need to consider exercising Compulsory Purchase Powers, which tend to be a last resort and are inherently complex.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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## **Public Participation**

### **Statement from Celia Bell, Student Representative on the Urchfont Management Board**

#### **Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

#### **Statement**

I have been given your name as a contact to make strong objection to the closure of Urchfont Manor. One of the reasons given for the closure of the Manor is that the courses offered are available elsewhere in Wiltshire. This absolutely not the case, for example the Bookbinding Courses and the City and Guilds textile courses to name but two and there are many more but in view of the short notice I do not have time to list them in this email.

I also object to the fact that there has been almost no time given and no proper notification for sufficient time for the users of the College to be aware of this proposal and to state their views.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Ms Diane Kerchevall**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

Urchfont Manor is too great an asset to dispose of. As one of the best adult education facilities in England it would leave a huge gap.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Dr Jennifer Johnson-Jones, Bedfordshire**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devises Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I write to object to the selling off of Urchfont Manor by the council, because it is a very valuable leaning resource, enjoyed by many hundreds of adult learners over the years.

I discovered Urchfont Manor two years ago, through the art tutor Richard Box, and was overwhelmed by the excellent facilities and the staff there. A number of adult residential colleges have recently closed, such as Pendril Hall and Earnley Concourse, and it would be a great shame for another fine institution to meet the same fate.

I live in North Bedfordshire, near to the adult residential college Knuston Hall, owned by Northamptonshire County Council. That too was threatened with closure and sale three years ago. The centre manager, Eamonn Flanagan, supported by many users of the Hall, managed to keep this from happening by convincing the Council that it is a valuable asset for the council, and is now used by the council as a training and conference facility as well as an adult education facility.

Knuston Hall has gone from strength to strength since that threatened closure and sale, and I hope that the council will see a similar scenario applying to Urchfont Manor.

Yours faithfully

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Elizabeth Ann Hunter**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I am very upset to read that Urchfont Manor is to be sold, thus losing a jewel in Wiltshire's crown.

Over the past ten years I have attended fifty courses and I have been greatly enriched by the excellent teaching, in well run courses in pleasant and sympathetic surroundings.

It has been a pleasure to meet students from all over Great Britain and abroad.

We have all enjoyed the unique facilities provided by Wiltshire at the manor.

Is it not possible to consider retaining this valuable asset?

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Hilary M Garrett, Burnley**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

My name is Hilary Garrett and I live in Burnley in Lancashire. I have been coming to Urchfont as a student of Fine Art for the last 7 years. I come usually 3 times per year.

As a woman from a working class background I found my world shift and a whole new horizon open up to me from the very first study course I attended at Urchfont Manor.

I see the world differently and have learned to explore ideas and express myself through drawing and painting. I am sure there will be many more people out there who have similar experiences from their encounters at Urchfont Manor.

I am now selling my work in Lancashire, Yorkshire and in Wiltshire.

It would be a travesty of all that is good in education and for society to close the manor.

Please look at alternatives. Higham Hall in Cumbria was formed into a charitable trust with the help of Cumbria County Council and now stands alone and is self supporting.

I implore you on behalf of all those people who have benefited so much from Urchfont Manor to be creative and find a way of keeping the Manor open.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012** (morning meeting)

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Jacky Attridge, Shrivenham, Oxon**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I have just heard about the proposal to shut Urchfont. This would be such a loss to all as over the years it has certainly built up an enviable reputation as a brilliant place for learning and friendship and food! I am against any idea to do away with it as it stands. Aint broke don't mend it comes to mind.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Lyn Hamilton, Student at Urchfont, South Cadbury**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

As a student of Urchfont over the past few years, I would like to register how upset and distressed I am at the thought of such a wonderful teaching centre being closed. Whilst I can totally appreciate the need for cost cutting in today's economic climate, the impact of this closure will not only affect staff but also Urchfont village, tutors and students. To many students this is their only opportunity to study in a safe, pleasant environment with an excellent teaching record. This is a decision that I firmly believe will be regretted in the future and I wish to add my individual protest to those I am sure you have already received.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012** (morning meeting)

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mrs Michele Lomas, Marlborough**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I am writing to express my objection at the proposed closure of Urchfont Manor College.

Urchfont manor provides a unique adult education and conference facility.

I have been a student on several courses at Urchfont Manor and have found it's unique atmosphere a very helpful learning environment.

I do not agree with the statement in the report that the community impact will be minimal. I believe that the loss of the college will have a significant impact on the local community. For example the local pubs and community shop rely on customers from the college. Local farms, dairies etc. supply the college with goods. The college is an employer to a large, loyal and dedicated team of local staff.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr Arnold Lowrey, Cardiff**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I have been an art tutor at Urchfont Manor for the last sixteen years, so was totally shocked and dismayed at the news, last night that it was to be sold.

This establishment is the jewel in the Wiltshire crown and to consider selling it when business is already starting to pick up again seems an act of madness and wanton vandalism. Bookings for various events are increasing, for example, my

Apart from the high standards of teaching which have been developed over the years, I feel "the experience" puts Wiltshire on the map which is an uncoded asset to tourism and business opportunity for the County.

I understand that profits for Wiltshire C C from Urchfont are recovering already, so any short term gains will be at the expense of the sale of the "family jewels." It has taken years to build a team of highly skilled people and Urchfont runs smoothly and efficiently.

I have heard it said that the Council has suggested that a considerable number of courses could be run in the local libraries. This would be totally impractical as students come for both the course content and social atmosphere. They are not going to travel far to attend a library or sports complex!

Please think, think again before it is too late.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr and Mrs Hopkins**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

Like, we suspect, many, many others, we are appalled to read that WCC are even considering closure of Urchfont Manor (College). Perhaps, in the very short term, closing it may make financial sense for the budget of your particular department. However, we would suggest that in the long term it makes no sense at all for WCC as a whole. Recreational learning is of proven benefit to the overall well being of the elderly (and many of Urchfont's clients are elderly) in that it provides a range of outlets, interests and social contacts. Removal of such facilities can only increase the burdens (and thus impinge upon the budgets) of the NHS, of Social Services and of Geriatric Services. We would hate to think WCC would open itself to accusations of blinkered short-termism.

Furthermore these would be in addition to direct costs to WCC of compulsory redundancy payments, etc., and costs to the wider community in terms of job losses and increasing numbers of those claiming unemployment benefit.

We suggest that even in today's straightened financial climate a culture of short-term thinking it makes no sense either financially or socially and we ask WCC, "Please think again".

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr John Blunden of Urchfont**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of  
Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

The recent announcement that the County Council is seeking to dispose of Urchfont Manor has come as a shock to many of us here in Urchfont.

It is not clear if the reason is because the running costs are greater than the income or that it simply represents a desire to capitalise on a marketable asset.

We are all aware of the necessity to cut public spending wherever possible:  
however, the loss of a facility dedicated to the furtherance of learning, study and skills is surely something that should be very carefully considered.

I am not disputing the efficacy of any decision the Council may make on our behalf but feel we should be acquainted with the facts leading to a possible decision which may have a profound effect not just upon the people in Urchfont but upon the wider community in Wiltshire and even across the country as a whole.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012** (morning meeting)

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr C P Cook**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

The recent announcement of the possible closure and sale of Urchfont Manor must come as a surprise and shock to all those connected to adult education. As a member of the public and a council tax payer in Wiltshire, I feel we have not been given the case for such extreme and final action.

Urchfont Manor has provided the venue for further learning, study and skills. It has attracted a large variety of tutors and students and now, when there are more people than ever who live for many years after retirement who are keen to further their knowledge and skills, it is proposed to remove the only dedicated adult residential education venue in Wiltshire. Neither a University (none in Wiltshire) nor a Wiltshire College can provide the facilities which are available at Urchfont Manor.

There is always the necessity not to waste public money and every public service should be examined to ensure there is no waste. We can not see the accounts for Urchfont Manor but I understood it pays its running costs from the charges made for adult education. That is a good record to have. The income may not meet major structural repairs and maintenance but often those costs are inflated by failures to keep on top of deteriorations as they occur. That failure should not be held against the Manor and be a reason to close it.

It is not clear from the limited information available if the Council want to rid themselves of this asset because annual costs exceed income or they want an instant injection of capital. It is obvious to say it, but the sale will provide a one off sum, once and that will be the end of any further income the Manor could generate and the end of residential adult education in this large county. Selling a property in the current financial situation may raise much less capital than the Council might expect.

The loss of Urchfont Manor to adult education will be damaging, profound and permanent not only to the communities in Wiltshire but beyond our boundaries. The Manor has a fine reputation that stretches beyond the County boundaries. It is a source of good income. The capital raised in any sale will barely be noticed in the accounts of Wiltshire Council but educationally it will be final and devastating. The closure of Urchfont Manor should not be permitted.

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr Richard Hawkins**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

The Agenda document notes:

1. Page 309 – Point 4 - To continue the delivery of the councils' policy to ensure all its property holdings are sustainable, fit for purpose, and represent value for money for Wiltshire residents, both now and in the future.
2. Page 312 – Para 12 - The current 'traded' service run from Urchfont has a projected £120,000 overspend for 2011/12.
3. Page 312 – Para 16 - In relation to Urchfont Manor, the disposal of this facility will result in a limited loss of revenue to local businesses. This will include provisions from the local farm and a potential loss of revenue to the local public house. Other services, such as grounds maintenance, are provided through the council's Sodexo contract and so have little or no benefit to the local community. Depending on the future use of the building by a purchaser, it is possible that its disposal may, in the longer term, have a beneficial impact on the immediate local economy, but that is not possible to predict at this time.
4. Page 314 - Para 25 - In relation to Urchfont Manor, there are currently five weddings and one 90th birthday party with confirmed bookings in the period up to the end of August 2012. There are a small number of provisional bookings, which have yet to pay a deposit, after this date. Closure in September 2012 will allow all confirmed bookings to go ahead.

I wish to comment on these statements.

1. The statement states '*and represent value for money for Wiltshire residents, both now and in the future*'. The council is the proud owner of a building and grounds of exceptional quality and beauty which as an educational college has not been used to its full and best potential. Indeed one has to ask why it is not producing an income for the Wiltshire residents! This is probably due to a lack of interest within Wiltshire council in producing a long term

business/development plan for the property. The sale of this building and its grounds will produce a 'one off income' for Wiltshire residents with no long term benefits. Surely even a leasing arrangement would be better value than an outright sale? The statement '*represent value for money for Wiltshire residents, both now and in the future*' is hardly appropriate for the proposed actions.

2. The projected overspend of £120,000 represents a daily overspend of approximately £329 – a small amount in the big picture which one would hope a simple business plan could and should rectify.
3. In the present financial situation I would suggest that the income from Urchfont Manor to local business, and in particular The Lamb Inn and Urchfont Community Shop, is extremely important. Whilst the sale to a future purchaser **might** have a beneficial impact on the local economy the retention of Urchfont Manor in its present status **will definitely** be of benefit.
4. If the sale of Urchfont Manor is approved I would suggest that the current bookings may well be affected, as confidence in achieving the expected high standards for which the Manor is known will be compromised.

The public have had little time to respond to these proposals. As a Wiltshire resident, and in particular a resident of Urchfont, I find the proposals somewhat misguided. Selling off the family silver will indeed add to the 'Income Column' for one year but the long term financial benefits possible from such a property will be lost forever. The council would do better producing a business/development plan to enable Urchfont Manor to achieve its full potential and to be of considerable financial benefit to Wiltshire residents.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr Robert Hughes FRCS**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I have just heard that Urchfont Manor may be closed this year. I have been a student now for several years. It is an excellent centre for study. The thought of coming again this year and continuing my studies has kept me going through my very recent harrowing and painful treatment for cancer.

I feel the council needs to appreciate how important the services at Urchfont Manor are to people with many diverse challenges in their lives. The service to life long learning provided by Urchfont Manor are second to none.

Please consider ways to maintain the Manor such as becoming an independent trust as Higham Hall have done

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mr G J Skinner CBE**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

Press reports suggest that the Council has taken decisions to dispose of Browfort and Urchfont Manor. I understand that in fact final decisions remain to be taken by the cabinet of the Council on 17 January. I hope that that is so and that, despite the short time available, representations such as this may be taken into careful account.

There can be little doubt that the majority of charge-payers understand why the Council must make economies and why redundant and uneconomic office properties should be disposed of. There may be disadvantages for localities and for individuals, but the imperative to make savings is a powerful and pressing one. On that basis, and given changes in working practice, a case can perhaps be made for the disposal of Browfort.

However, the proposed disposal of Urchfont Manor is more questionable.

It is, of course, the case that the current central government policy is to emphasise the provision of adult education at local level rather than at residential institutions. Urchfont Manor has a foot in both camps: while providing residential courses it also serves the local community, with many of its students coming on a daily basis from the nearer parts of the county. Indeed, it has to be recognised that, pace government policy, in rural areas like ours adult education cannot be provided in every discrete locality and that some institutions like the Manor will be needed.

We are told that the Manor does not pay. That is hardly unique in education. Indeed, what educational institution does cover its cost? Moreover, the running cost is, I understand, small. (It might even be that with better administration and marketing the Manor could be made less uneconomic.)

We are also told that the impact of disposal on local businesses would be small. That may be. But the impact on the amenities of the local community would be disproportionately large. All year round the Manor and its grounds, including the

cricket ground, the croquet lawns and Oakfrith Wood, are extensively used and valued by local people, young and old alike.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is the issue of stewardship. In Urchfont Manor the charge-payers of Wiltshire, through the Council and its predecessors, have long owned and had access to a rural gem. Successive authorities have cared for it, maintaining it and giving its buildings and trees protected status. Perhaps some oligarch or city magnate would buy it, paying the Council a sum that would help a little in the present financial crisis. But once disposed of, Urchfont Manor will never be recovered: ultimately we, the residents of Wiltshire would be the losers.



**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mrs Janet Crowther, Kent**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

Urchfont Manor is a unique establishment that offers immense opportunities for adults to extend their learning experiences. It offers a wide base of courses, the fact that many are residential is an additional benefit for the very many students who travel from across the country to attend.

Urchfont Manor should be the Jewel in Wiltshire's Crown. It could be said that the Council have been negligent for many years as they have failed to maintain the property to the standard that they are now saying is needed for an adult education establishment. I have attended many long courses at Urchfont since 1986, mainly as a student and now as a tutor. You will never be able to replace Urchfont Manor, and I suspect the Members have no wish to. It will be a very sad day for all the very many students, tutors, staff, and all the outside agencies that are involved with the College, should it be closed. The monetary gain for the County, seems small compared with the loss to adults who wish to improve themselves educationally.

I brave the M25 on a Friday evening, at least ten times a year, many of which are in the dark of winter, knowing that at the end of my journey the tranquility, inspiration, education and friendship provided by Urchfont Manor is waiting.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mrs Mair Edwards**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I have just been told that there is to be a discussion at your next council meeting about Urchfont Manor College.

This is a fantastic facility that benefits so many people not just those living in Wiltshire.

I have attended regularly since 1997, first the City and guilds course in Embroidery and now at a Masterclass.

I know that all the members of our Masterclass will be be devastated if we were unable to keep attending Urchfont Manor.

This college is known all over the country as a centre for creativity especially for textiles.

It's loss will be a devastating blow for the many students that attend courses that enrich their lives.

I do not know whether I will be able to object to any plans for selling Urchfont Manor as I am not a Wiltshire resident but feel that I had to contact you.

Mair Edwards (Mrs)

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Mrs Nina Guilfoyle**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I am shocked and upset to hear that Wiltshire Council is considering selling Urchfont Manor. As regular student of Urchfont, enjoying the many courses on offer, I consider this to be a very short-sighted and ill-conceived plan. It is well known that in times of recession, arts and crafts flourish and I cannot believe that Urchfont does not provide a wonderful service in this respect. To sell Urchfont Manor means that it can never be bought back for your County and that would be a very great loss.

I would urge your council to come up with a creative solution, that ideally preserves Urchfont just as it is, but if that is not possible, then as close as can be, but certainly not to sell it.

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Ms Catherine Brown**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I am writing this as I cannot understand the idea of the manor being sold, This wonderful building and beautiful surroundings offers so much to so many people, I'm aware that the idea of adult education is not a main priority in the council, but what the manor holds is unique, we have a place in the country not the hustle and bustle of a town where people can not only come to learn they can also unwind and relax, in today's society that is just as important as the learning its self, This applies to day groups, those that may just stay one night, weekends and those that take part on week long courses. The older generation benefit greatly from this, having the opportunity to stay away for a couple of days in a relaxing environment while being able to participate in activities that keeps the mind active. This is something that cannot be achieved in a busy normal college setting that is in a town or city.

There are very few provisions/opportunities/jobs in rural community's today more often they are the ones to suffer, most you have to go into a town for, This is an established business that is popular, well used and well loved this is proven by the people that come back again and again, It is one that the council should be proud of saying they own not thinking of selling. Money is to be spent on building new and upgrading existing buildings for campuses mainly in town settings. You have a successful provision here in Urchfont that benefits so many people but money needs to be spent on to upgrade it, rather than looking at selling this really is one time your money would be well spent, look after what you already have . You are in a unique privileged position to own this estate as a college, probably one of the few like it in the country, be proud of it, love it(upgrade), and it will grow.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Ms Lorna Abel, Southampton**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I wish to convey my concern about the proposed closure of Urchfont Manor College. I have been a student since 1992.

My concern is that the students have not been notified. We attended in December and were asked for the deposit for our four meeting this year which I have sent.

The college is an excellent adult learning centre which caters for a wide range of subjects.

I think it is very short sighted of Wiltshire County Council to close such a valued seat of learning, especially when they can waste money on the unsuccessful park and ride schemes in Salisbury.

I am not a Wiltshire resident but my mother in law lives in Salisbury.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Ms Norah Kennedy**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

For the past twenty year I have been running very popular willow courses at Urchfont Manor. These courses always book up very soon after the brochure has been mailed out with students paying in full when they book.

The students come from all over the south of England on the day courses and from much further afield on the residential courses. Students return time and time again because they love the place.

The accommodation is good, the food outstanding and the staff are always friendly and welcoming. Students love the location and the grounds and often stay an extra night before or after a course to explore the local area. Students on my courses have enjoyed wandering down to the local pub and the village shop.

Somewhere like Urchfont Manor is so important because of the courses they provide – there really is something for everyone in the latest programme.

At the moment there is a great interest and demand for courses where students can learn to make things – students want to make something rather than buy it and learn all the skills that have been lost on the last decade or two – Urchfont is one of the few places where student can learn all these important life changing skills

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Ms Penny Copland-Griffiths**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I gather you are the person to contact concerning the closure of Urchfont manor, the news of which I received from my tutor Valerie Oxley.

Like, I am sure, very many people I am shocked at the news as I have enjoyed and benefited by the various courses held at Urchfont for many years. There will be a vast chasm, which will never be refilled, in Wiltshire's Education facilities if this goes ahead.

I ask that the Cabinet reconsider this decision – surely they do realise how important this place is to the mental and physical well being of the hundreds of people who attend from near and far.

Yours sincerely

Penny Copland-Griffiths

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**Public Participation**

**Statement and Questions from Ms Stella Hall**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of  
Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

I have read about the closure of Urchfont Manor and am truly disappointed and saddened. It has been a wonderful venue for a huge variety of subjects and people. As far as I know Wiltshire doesn't provide anything similar in the county.

I, like many others have benefitted from the resource. Indeed my partner is attending a weekend course starting tomorrow evening.

It is understandable that all areas of expenditure are coming under close scrutiny and I can only assume Urchfont is closing for financial reasons - possibly short term ones so that monies can be generated for other projects.

It is a great pity that wider public consultation was not considered earlier and more than likely it is now too late ..... but please can you reconsider. After all, there are real working examples of successful centres similar to Urchfont - West Dean, Great Missenden etc - so clearly it is feasible to provide such centres for learning. And if it's not Urchfont what are the plans for an alternative.

I look forward to hearing from you following the Cabinet meeting.

**Questions**

- why has decision not been made clear to the public before now?
- what is the consultation period?
- why have we only until noon today to submit questions, when for most of us, the first time we knew about the closure was on opening yesterdays (thursday's) Gazette. It seems like a very undemocratic process to only allow until noon the next day to make protestations and representations?
- what alternatives are being considered for Urchfont type courses?
- what, in detail, are the reasons for closing Urchfont - financial is a very broad statement?

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Ms Valerie Oxley**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I am shocked and disappointed to hear that Urchfont College, near Devizes is in danger of closing in September 2012. I have taught 25 courses at Urchfont Manor over a span of 15 years. I have enjoyed working with committed students from the local community and beyond, backed up with superb care in a stunning landscape. I have never thought of the courses I teach at Urchfont Manor College as 'holidays', to me they are study weekends with students, people who are keen to learn and develop a skill. A study break at Urchfont Manor can be a life enriching experience, not only as a result of the learning on the course and the meeting and making of new friends, but also the impact of the environment in which this all takes place, the beautiful garden around the Manor, Oakfrith Wood and surrounding fields and delightful village. Urchfont Manor is a unique and outstanding place for adult education, development, training and learning. Closure would have a great impact on the local community.

Reputations for continued excellence take years to achieve and maintain. It has been proven that adults learn more quickly in a residential, safe and secure environment, it would be a disaster if the residential adult education provided by Urchfont Manor was to be curtailed. Urchfont Manor can offer more than just a high standard of education, the situation is superb and the staff there are a dedicated team, the food is wholesome and considered by myself and my students as absolutely outstanding. Students return again and again, new students are welcome and local people are proud of 'their' Manor. Everyone speaks highly of the Urchfont experience.

Please do your utmost to find some way to help adult education to continue and flourish at Urchfont Manor, to help people to develop and learn new skills, to give them confidence and feel valued as they move through life. Don't turn your backs on residential adult education, don't chide the many people have fought great battles for adult education through difficult times in this country. There are many people who feel passionately about the future of courses for adults at Urchfont Manor, once they go you also lose their good will.

With the imminent increase in University fees there will be many people looking for alternative short courses and training – an ideal opportunity for Colleges such as Urchfont to develop and expand – don't close your doors too soon!

I rang the College recently to check on 'numbers' on my courses for this year – the results are below:-

**URCHFONT MANOR COLLEGE**

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May – Sunday 27<sup>nd</sup> May **2012** 12/12 (6 waiting) FULL

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> t October – Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October **2012** 12/12 (4 waiting) FULL

With regards,

**Valerie Oxley Cert.Ed, FHEA, SBA**

Tutor for Botanical Illustration

Former Director of the Diploma in Botanical Illustration at the University of Sheffield

Moderator for the Diploma in Botanical Illustration at the Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh

Tutor for the University of Cambridge Adult Education

**Worksop, Notts**

**Public Participation**

**Statement from Nicola Vesey Williams, Local Resident**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)**

**Statement**

I live in Upavon and my husband Peter is a parish councillor. I discovered yesterday that Wiltshire Council propose at committee on Tuesday 17th January to close and sell Urchfont Manor. I regularly attend Urchfont Manor as a student as it offers an excellent range of courses including City & Guilds there is only one other local authority I know of that offer a similar range of course in textiles and Art & Craft subjects and that is Great Missenden Abbey in Buckinghamshire that they come second to Urchfont Manor in my opinion.

It would be a terrible loss to adult education if it should close, textile artists and designers come from all over the country to attend courses there it is a centre of excellence which is reflected in its annual exhibition and open day and showcases a wide range of crafts and skills.

I feel the council has not given council taxes payers and residents the opportunity to voice their objection to this proposed closure. Since moving to Wiltshire two years ago I have attended over ten courses there as I find it harder and harder to find adult education courses as cutbacks have hit this type of education over recent years.

Urchfont has enabled me to meet like minded people who have had the opportunity to develop their skills and talents which is only a good thing for the community at large.

So as a councillor I urge you in the strongest possible terms to represent taxes payers and voters at this committee meeting to protect this outstanding centre of excellence for the residents of Wiltshire.

It would be a sad day if Urchfont should close and a stain on Wiltshire Councils reputation if this is allowed to close and would make me think again who I would vote for in local elections! As the agenda was only made public on Monday I feel the general public has very little time to make their views known which works to the councils advantage and not to those of us who feel strongly about this matter.

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012** (morning meeting)

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Nicola Mitchell, Chairman of Urchfont Parish Council**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

Urchfont Parish Council is deeply disappointed to learn of proposals by Wiltshire Council to sell Urchfont Manor. For many years it has been regarded as one of the 'Jewels in the Crown' for Wiltshire Council and the former Wiltshire County Council.

The Manor and its associated facilities provide a much valued centre for adult education and community activities. It is a unique venue for both day and residential courses drawing students, not only locally, but from all over the country. It is used by local residents for family and celebratory occasions and the Croquet Club enjoy and maintain two beautiful croquet lawns in the garden. This year the apple orchard has provided the opportunity to develop a community fruit juice project: harvesting, pressing and bottling delicious apple juice to sell locally.

The surrounding land of Urchfont Manor is also very important. The community benefits from the Playing Field which provides recreational facilities for children and the tennis courts. Oakfrith Wood Nature Reserve is very popular with local residents, walkers, school and pre-school pupils, as well as the Richmond Fellowship for Woodland Craft Activities. The cricket field is leased by John Snook, a local farmer, who has generously loaned it to the Cricket Club for the past 30 years. All of these community activities involve a substantial number of dedicated volunteers in their maintenance and management.

The Manor also provides valuable local employment opportunities and support to the local businesses: The Lamb Pub, the Community Shop and the Post Office - the only three remaining businesses in the village!

In spite of the current economic climate it seems a great shame for Wiltshire Council to part with such a unique asset as Urchfont Manor and it will be a very sad day for the village of Urchfont if it is sold.

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**Public Participation**

**Questions from Mr Nigel Partridge**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Question 1**

Has consideration been given to increasing the business at Urchfont Manor? It would appear to have great potential, e.g. the number of weddings booked for 2012 shows an increase on previous years.

**Question 2**

Adult courses are available elsewhere but is there any other venue that can offer the same facilities as Urchfont Manor and, more particularly, the lovely setting? Many people on the courses are there for a break or a holiday - the venue with its accommodation and surrounding grounds is therefore part of the overall package.

**Question 3**

Once the Manor is sold will it be possible to acquire such a venue in the future? Is this, in any case, the best time to consider selling the property?

**Question 4**

Urchfont Manor has been included with the proposed office closures. What proportion of the projected savings relates to Urchfont Manor?

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**Public Participation**

**Statement from Sally Boehme and Clifford Johnson**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

This is a plea to Wilts Council to consider carefully the option to close Urchfont Manor. As a student of Urchfont, attending 2-3 times a year for the last 15 years (along with my husband) and LIVING IN KENT I would hope the Council consider what a contribution Urchfont makes to the Adult Ed community, not just in Wilts but to the country as a whole. I have met people who attend regularly from Essex, Surrey, Worcestershire, Berkshire and even Lancashire (a 5 hour drive) who all value the educational opportunities Urchfont offers in the highest regard.

In this time of holidays increasingly being taken at home in this country and the increasing interest in arts and crafts, Urchfont offers a unique experience and the fact that it offers it in such a beautiful part of Wiltshire has meant that we have got to know a part of the country that we love and often return to. Urchfont makes a significant contribution to the economy of the county in this manner, which is something the Council may not have considered.

We have only just heard about this debate and feel it is too short a notice to allow all to voice an opinion. However, I doubt the council will postpone the meeting but please know that there are a lot of people around the country who will feel that a short sighted decision will have been made if Urchfont is to close.

I would be grateful if the meeting could consider the example of Higham Hall; a college such as Urchfont which was threatened with closure but which now acts profitably as a charitable trust. As Urchfont is so valuable to a lot of people this would seem to be the best option for all and would preserve the valuable tenets of adult education, which has been so much under threat over the last few years. Trying to sell such a property in the current climate would take time and would cause the building to degrade. As it is listed, this would not be good. Retaining it would also mean that the Urchfont village community would retain an essential part.

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## Public Participation

Statement from various members of Staff at Urchfont Manor (details at end)

Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings (Item 9)

### Statement



URCHFONT MANOR

### Purpose of Report

#### Economic impact of the proposal

16 In relation to Urchfont Manor, the disposal of this facility will result in a **limited loss of revenue to local businesses**. This will include provisions from the local farm and a potential loss of revenue to the local public house. Other services, such as grounds maintenance, are provided through the council's Sodexo contract and so have little or no benefit to the local community. Depending on the future use of the building by a purchaser, **it is possible that its disposal may, in the longer term, have a beneficial impact on the immediate local economy, but that is not possible to predict at this time.**

### Statement by Staff at Urchfont Manor

#### DEATH OF A HOUSE, COMMUNITY, JOBS & EDUCATION

It was once said by Jane Scott that Urchfont Manor was the Jewel in the Crown in the eyes of what was once Wiltshire County Council.

So what has gone wrong for this to have changed?

**WE ARE NOT JUST A COLLEGE WE ARE A CREATIVE COLLEGE CATERING FOR THE ARTISTIC NEEDS OF MANY STUDENTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY.**

We are still in shock at the 'possible' closure of Urchfont Manor. Many of us have worked at the Manor for many years and to some of us this is our dream job. We have come to love everything the Manor stands for, the educational courses it

provides which is so different from other colleges. This house has become an institution to so many over the 60 years it has been running. It is an iconic place where many people have graced the building and grounds with their presence over the years. Many students come back year after year. They come for the variety of courses which is from the 'norm'. The courses are only a part of their being there. They come for the relaxed atmosphere, the tranquillity of the grounds, the wonderful food which we at the college cater for all those with special or specific diets. We all know one another, staff and students; it is like greeting old friends every time they come back. It is a college of education, friendship and company.

Some students use their time at the Manor whilst on their course as holiday. Meal times are always such a joy where staff and students have gathered and chatted and laughed about the day's events. They work well into the evening and this is because it is a residential college and there are not many left in the country. After their hard day they retire to bed feeling happy, relaxed and elated at what they have accomplished. Where else can one go where you see squirrels running around the premises, up and down trees, rabbits greet you as you pull into the drive. Then there are the deer which use the grounds regularly, you can see the family of them together. We have a bee hive in the grounds where they make Urchfont honey and recently Urchfont Apple Juice from the fallen apples from the Manors orchards.

There are beautiful walks round the village and Oakfrith Wood is always a joy to walk round, especially when the Bluebells are out. The students can take time out when doing courses to relax by taking a walk in the woods. The Open University courses have been buzzing with the knowledge of such courses such as Creative Writing and Shakespeare. Other courses include lace making, chair making, foreign languages, photography, art as well as the City & Guilds courses which all come to Urchfont Manor. We have Tai Chi, Meditation and Buddhism, courses which need space and quiet. There are walking courses and day trip courses, there are travelling art courses which tour the countryside and the groups stop and paint. They go for the day and come back by 6pm ready for their evening meal. We have stained glass, bookbinding, enamelling and silver jewellery making. All these are courses which cannot be transferred to places like council libraries, the heritage centre and the Family Learning Service; the facilities will not be able to handle these types of courses. We have GP's who come to stay with us, teachers and let's not forget two groups which come each year and book the whole of the Manor and grounds, the Manor suits their full requirements as the groups are of a sensitive nature and they need to have total privacy during their stays, where will they go now? Urchfont Manor provides their every need for total privacy and plenty of rooms for the groups to break up for the different discussions they require.

Students travel from Europe for some courses including the Open University. We also have many well-known artists and local artists who grace us with their presence on doing private painting groups. We at Urchfont are unique in our approach to specialised courses which I feel will not be undertaken anywhere else.

This is a place where you can escape the day to day hassles of life; we only have one TV in the whole of the College. In your break you can sit and read the newspaper. Students are never hurried during their stay, they are well taken care of, and everything is thought through for their needs right down to their special diet requirements. Students never have to remind the staff about their little ailments, diets, whether they prefer a bath or shower. All this information is there at our fingertips and we always check when booking that these things are still in place.

Weddings are now becoming a favourite spot. Couples get married in the local church and then come to Urchfont for their wedding breakfast and evening reception.

They have their photographs taken in the beautiful grounds outside the Manor House. The weddings we have held here have been a huge success. This is only the start, our new addition to the staff has done a wonderful job these past months and we have more weddings booked this year and there is lots of interest for the next year. Weddings need to be booked well in advance and it would be such a shame if the dreams of those wishing to use Urchfont Manor as their venue be refused. We have ample off road parking at Urchfont for guests to park their cars.

The closure of Urchfont Manor will have a huge impact on the local economy. It will be a devastating loss to all those who live in the village and the staff, many from Urchfont Village and surrounding villages and who have dedicated most of their working lives to the Manor. We will find it hard to find other employment as a number of us do not have a car or drive, therefore making it difficult for us to seek employment too far away.

It will also have a huge impact on many students, who not only come to Urchfont for courses, but they also use this time as a holiday. The staff at the Manor treats everyone with respect and is very conscious and courteous of their individual needs.

Our facilities (although not 3\*) and food (which is at least 5\*), makes it one of the best places to come to relax, enjoy your course and mingle with new people each time you attend a course. All the staff is friendly and the environment makes our students stay relaxing. Some of us have also attended a number of courses at Urchfont Manor and each time we have left with a feeling of total satisfaction and relaxation. We were all hoping to attend many more over the years.

In December 2011 we became the venue for the local school when they had water problems and they thought they would have to cancel the children's Christmas Dinner. They called us for help and we did. We set up some of our outside buildings for them and we watched the children come marching through our grounds, all excited at their little adventure they were going to have at Urchfont. The school also have a vegetable patch in the Manors grounds where the children come and plant their produce and come and visit to see its development and then dig their produce up.

Then there are the croquet lawns which are kept neat and tidy by the local croquet teams. They are always on hand to show how the game is played for students and day groups if they are having an away day at the Manor. It is a joy to see the players out in the summer playing croquet while you are busying about setting up the tables in the dining room for the residents and conference courses.

The cricket pitch, the croquet, even the walks are only a few examples which have benefited the community and wider community over the last 60 years. I feel it is very short sighted of those who have no dealings with the Manor except for the occasional meeting; you do not see the unique facility we offer here and that is not available anywhere else in the country. We need for you to see how we function and operate before making an informed decision.

**This is what makes Urchfont Manor different from any other college.  
Please give us a chance to turn this around and show you how it can work.  
Give us until the end of 2013 to prove what a team we are at Urchfont.**

**WE HAVE SERVED THE COMMUNITY FOR 60 YEARS AND ONCE YOU  
DISCARD THIS PRECIOUS JEWEL IT WILL BE LOST FOREVER**

**Eleanor Young (Receptionist/Admin/Bookings) Dianne Hayward  
(Housekeeping)  
Margaret Simper (Pantry) Catherine Brown (Housekeeping) Dionne Surman  
(Housekeeping) Christine Bozier (Housekeeping) Audrey Laurie  
(Housekeeping)  
Jessica Scull (Conference & Events Assistant) Marie Smith (Administrative  
Assistant)  
Sharon Davies (Conference & Events Manager)  
Christel Smart (Services Manager) John Young (Maintenance), Pete Rutt  
(Gardener)  
Martin Brown (Volunteer)**

**Public Participation**

**Statement from Students and Tutors at Urchfont Manor (details at end of document)**

**Proposed Creation of Central Devizes Customer Access Point and the Closure of Browfort, Urchfont Manor and Bradley Road Buildings**

**Statement**

My name is Wendy Trinder and I am a tutor for painting and drawing courses at Urchfont Manor throughout the year. I live in Market Lavington and I am very aware of local feelings for this Adult Education Centre as well as those of students and tutors.

The building is listed Grade II and so development and change of use one would assume is limited. Within the estate attached to the building are some areas leased for farming, Oakfrith Wood and the paths leading to it, the school playing field, the cricket pitch, pavilion and the two croquet pitches.

People from the village also use the grounds for walking and the flower gardens were once maintained by some local volunteers. The grounds and gardens of the Manor are all well used on a regular basis.

Staff within the house tends to be from the local area, even though tutors for the adult education courses come from a wider area.

Students on the courses come from all over England and Wales, not just locally as they are able to stay overnight if they wish, even if they are on single day courses. Some even stay on afterwards for a holiday in our beautiful quite countryside.

Bookings with deposits paid, come in as soon as the brochure is printed. Some are so popular that they are booked from year to year, example: Botanical Painting with Valerie Oxley.

Out of county participators also use village facilities, example: the village pub, shop and post office.

Open University courses are expanding and need residential meeting places which make Urchfont Manor the perfect place, while conferences, meetings and classes for e.g. poetry reading and discussion groups could be moved to other buildings - where could the various exercise classes, embroidery classes, woodcraft classes and my painting classes be held? These courses would certainly not be able to be held in a

library. How can they be advertised and bookings made centrally? Where is there sufficient parking and overnight accommodation?

The Manor gives a central participation area for all these classes and conferences, with well trained staff for bookings, room services and meals, as well as advertising via the brochure and telephone and good off road parking.

There are very few of these Adult Education colleges left now and in rural areas like ours, with well dispersed villages, encouragement for local students and visitors from out-of-country to participate in courses is much needed.

There are already many bookings for courses advertised in the brochure for dates in September, October and November of this year. Deposits are taken when booking and these will have been paid and the dates sorted for both students and tutors. Students will have booked their time if working in readiness for their course.

My life has revolved around my courses for the last 10 years, both in teaching and preparation. Many students are now good friends with me and other students and will be very upset if the Manor closes.

Wendy Trinder BSc.FSBA.SWA & Others (student now tutor)

Jane Lemon MBE (tutor now student) –  
(<http://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/news.php?id=333>)

Hazel Credland (Tutor City&Guilds)

Valerie Oxley (Art Tutor) (sending statement)

Arnold Lowrey (Art Tutor) (<http://www.lowrey.co.uk/>) (sending statement)





## Embroiderers' Guild

sharing opportunities for discovery and creativity

### MARLBOROUGH & DISTRICT BRANCH

Cllr. Jane Scott  
Wiltshire County Council  
Trowbridge.

January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012

Dear Cllr. Scott,

I write as Chairman of the Marlborough and District Branch of the Embroiderers' Guild. The Embroiderers' Guild is over 100 years old and this branch has been in existence for over 30 years, and has currently some 77 members who live in Northern Wiltshire.

We have learned with dismay that it is to be proposed to close Urchfont Manor and sell off the buildings; this will be a disaster.

Urchfont has been a centre of excellence for learning new skills across a range of activities for very many years. In particular, from the special position of our Branch members, it has provided the opportunity to learn new techniques from some of the most talented tutors, to keep up to date with new trends in textiles, and has enabled many of our members to achieve qualifications in a range of specialist subjects through City and Guilds and other similar organisations. The end-of-course Open Day has been an annual event much appreciated by the many visitors who come to admire and appreciate the work of the students, enrol for future courses, purchase essential materials which can only otherwise be obtained by mail order, and enjoy the beautiful buildings and gardens where all this learning takes place.

There is no other comparable facility in Wiltshire. What Urchfont offers cannot be measured in money terms alone, and, on behalf of the Branch, I do urge the Council to think again, and maintain this incomparable jewel for the benefit of future generations of students.

Yours sincerely,

Yvonne Miles  
(Chairman, Marlborough & District Embroiderers' Guild)

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