

**Question from Cllr Nick Murry**  
**Agenda Items 5 – Public Participation**

**To Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications;  
Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property; and  
Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste**

**Statement**

These proposals would create substantial congestion and long delays on the rest of the road network in Chippenham and parts of Calne.

- We know from TRICS data from similar developments that each new dwelling will generate approximately 0.5 trips at peak hours, which equates to some 3,750 vehicle trips at peak times.
- We also know from previous and recent housing development in Chippenham and Calne that very few, if any of the new residents will work within the development site, or even locally. Most of the 3,750 vehicle, peak hour flows generated will therefore enter the existing road network, joining existing roads (A350 to the north, A4 in the East and A350 in the south).
- We also know that the aforementioned roads already have very high traffic flows and would require large new junctions to cope with this concentration of additional traffic, two of these junction locations being in sensitive rural areas, and the third junction on the northern part of the A350 adjacent to housing areas.
- We also know the A4 at Studley is a heavily trafficked road carrying about 1,300 vehicles in the peak hour, with long delays for peak hour traffic attempting to enter the A4 from Derry Hill at Studley Crossroads, and could not cope with almost three times that volume of traffic, as a result of the HIF bid proposals.
- And we know Calne is already congested, has on-going severe air quality issues and is certain to take a significant volume of additional traffic travelling to and from the east from the proposed new development.

**Question 1:**

It seems hard to believe that the Council has not gathered evidence or assessed the potential impacts of this proposed scheme that would have led it to the above conclusions. Can the Cabinet therefore either make public whatever evidence it has gathered and assessment it has undertaken in this regard as part of its HIF proposal, or confirm that it has not undertaken appropriate analysis before requesting this funding?

(one or the other please)

**Response:**

As part of the HIF bid submission process and our current work on the Road Route options traffic modelling analysis has been undertaken in accordance with Department for Transport – Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) and continues. The traffic modelling conducted thus far has indicated that the distributor road would help reduce traffic flows in central Chippenham but has also identified additional improvements to the existing road network, some mentioned above, that would need to be made during the lifetime of the programme delivery. As part of the formal consultation on the road route options the Programme team will share information to the general public and stakeholders on the road route options assessment process and this includes information on traffic modelling

**Statement 2:**

The proposed HIF bid scheme is underpinned by a completely unsustainable concept of development, based on in-migration of people who will need to commute out, creating even greater dependency on use of the car, whilst worsening the quality of life for local residents, damaging the natural environment and generating substantial quantities of (otherwise avoidable) greenhouse gas emissions.

- Calne has had amongst the highest levels of housing growth over many years with very little increase in employment, such that there is a very large imbalance between housing and employment that has led to a high proportion of its residents commuting by car, many over long distances to work in Swindon, Reading, Newbury, London, Bristol, Bath, Cheltenham, Gloucester and elsewhere.
- The extensive development in Cepen Park North and Cepen Park South, and expansion of Monkton Park estate in Chippenham has similarly resulted in substantially more out-commuting, localised congestion and air pollution.
- In addition to a massive increase in commuter traffic, the proposed distributor road and Junction 17 improvements would generate new trips and draw existing traffic from other routes, changing travel patterns and resulting in even more traffic through Chippenham and Calne to access the proposed new road.
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**Question 2:**

Can the Cabinet please share the analysis it has undertaken in making its decision to designate this site for a road scheme and massive housing development, ahead of any evidence or analysis undertaken as part of the Local Plan Review and without consulting the public or debating at full Council, including the predicted impact on the climate and natural environment?

**Response:**

The Council's Cabinet has not made a decision to "designate" this site for a road scheme.

The Council as landowner is promoting the area for development including the delivery of essential road infrastructure and is developing detailed proposals that will be consulted on with the local community and other stakeholders as part of the Local Plan process. This will provide rationale and justification for housing growth in this area taking account of local housing need and other relevant material considerations.