

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**2 February 2021**

**Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors**

**Statement and Questions from Ian James – Bremhill Parish Councillor**

**To Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications**

**Statement 1**

Rawlings Green site has been part of the Local Plan since 2016, it is noted planning permission was granted to allow access to the rail crossing over the Great Western railway to allow access from Parsonage Way and into the new Rawlings Green site.

**Question 1 (21-31)**

Why has it taken 4 years to achieve this access, and when will construction start on this site?

**Response:**

This is a complex site. The timescales are not unusual. The planning application for the new bridge (reference 18/02037/FUL) was approved with conditions in November 2018. The applicant is in the process of discharging conditions attached to the consent with a view to commencement of development at the earliest opportunity.

The planning application for the site at Rawlings Green (reference 15/12351/OUT) was approved with conditions and planning obligation in September 2020. The date when construction begins will ultimately be decided by the developer

The Council has not paid for a ransom strip, nor does the Council believe there is a ransom strip as the land has been recorded as public highway since 1995.

**Question 2 (21-32)**

Wavin, the company that runs a business from Parsonage Way owned the land adjacent to the access to the rail crossing. Did the Council pay for the ransom strip to allow access to the rail crossing or did the developer?

**Response:**

See above response

**Question 3 (21-33)**

If the Council did pay for the ransom strip how much taxpayers money was used?

**Response:**

See above response

**Question 4 (21-34)**

Was any HIF money set aside to pay this ransom strip?

**Response:**

See above response

**Question 5 (21-35)**

If taxpayers money was used why is the Council subsidising a developer to enable that company to build at Rawlings Green when that surely must be the developer's responsibility?

**Response:**

See above response

**Statement 2**

In the Future Chippenham promotion material on line it states "The HIF grant enables us to draw down funding to support the delivery of infrastructure works should planning be granted for the development to proceed"

Now this statement seems to run contrary to the overall project plan promoted by the Council where it clearly states the planning permission for the road comes before the approval of the new Local Plan. In planning terms, the new emerging plan should be passed by an Inspector where he will set out the number of houses required and agree that the road infrastructure proposed by the Council will meet the needs of the development.

If this does not happen the Council could end up with a road and possibly less houses than the Council had planned for.

**Question 6 (21-36)**

Please can you affirm that Council will wait until the Local Plan has been passed and then put forward the planning application for the road as is suggested by Future Chippenham?

**Response:**

The Future Chippenham Team will progress the planning application for the road at the appropriate time.

**Question 7 (21-37)**

At the December Cabinet meeting you kindly agreed to supply the costs for the construction of the road infrastructure included in the HIF bid, please can you supply the information for the Future Chippenham consultation process as promised?

**Response:**

The Options Assessment report (published on the Future Chippenham Consultation page) confirms outline costs for the delivery of the road.