

05 December 2018

FAO: Mr S Lee, Planning Inspector
C/O Mr I Kemp, Programme Officer

Economic Development and Planning
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Dear Mr Lee,

Re: Examination of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP)

I write further to our letter to you of 30 August 2018 in which we set out proposals to undertake a focussed consultation on the [Council's Schedule of Proposed Changes and associated evidence base documents](#).

The consultation was undertaken from 27 September to 9 November and generated 541 representations from 298 organisations and members of the public. In addition, a petition containing 348 signatures was submitted in respect of the proposals associated with the allocation of Elm Grove Farm. A report on the consultation, including a breakdown of the main issues raised is enclosed.

At the close of the focussed consultation we unfortunately identified an administrative error that resulted in 400 consultees in our database (approximately 22% of all consultees) not being directly notified of the consultation (i.e. written to). The breakdown of who we did not directly notify is as follows:

- South Gloucestershire District Council (incorrect email address, but subsequent confirmation that they have no comments on the published materials);
- North Wessex Downs AONB Management Board (although consultation response received);
- Coombe Bissett Conservation Community Group;
- Paxcroft Mead Residents Association (commented at the informal consultation stage only);
- West Wilts Watch Group (commented at the informal consultation stage only);
- Marlborough Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (commented on options at the town through the informal consultation stage);
- Scout Association (commented at the informal consultation stage only);
- Friends of Abberd Brook (commented on options at Calne through the informal consultation stage);
- 355 individual members of the public; and
- 8 neighbouring Parish Councils (incorrect Clerk details).

In addition to the breakdown of consultees above that were not directly notified of the consultation, 185 Parish/Town Councils were not written to through a consultation letter but received two newsletters sent directly to them which included the text from the letters the Council sent to consultees.

Despite the administrative error, the focussed consultation was widely publicised on the Council's website, as well as through press notices, social media, two Parish/Town Council newsletters and notifications sent to all Wiltshire's elected members. All documents were made available for the commencement of the consultation at the Council's Main Offices and all council run libraries in Wiltshire. We also issued press releases promoting the consultation during the consultation period.

Whilst this regrettable incident has occurred, we are confident that despite not directly contacting a number of consultees, the consultation was nonetheless accessible and widely promoted, thereby offering ample scope for all those with an interest in the Plan to comment. Indeed, of those who we did not directly notify, we nonetheless received comments from some of these on the published materials. We also attracted attention from a significant number of people who had not commented before.

However, for the avoidance of doubt and to positively address our administrative error, we could offer the consultees on our database who did not comment and were not directly notified of the focussed consultation the opportunity to comment.. The process would involve us writing (letter/email) to all relevant bodies and individuals listed, outlining the reason for the consultation and providing links to the published consultation materials. Whilst the Council believes that the Parish/Town Council newsletters provided sufficient direct notification of the consultation, for the avoidance of doubt this could also be extended to those parish councils who didn't respond and were not written to.

If you consider targeted consultation to be a necessary step, we propose to undertake a six week, targeted consultation running from Monday 10 December to Monday 21 January 2019. We would then process the representations received and provide you with an addendum to our submitted Consultation Report no later than Friday 1 February 2019.

In the interests of maintaining progress with the examination of the Plan, we look forward to hearing from you shortly about the need for additional targeted consultation. In addition, we would welcome confirmation of dates for the hearing sessions and your list of matters and questions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alistair Cunningham'.

Alistair Cunningham
Corporate Director – Growth, Investment and Place
Wiltshire Council