

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP)

Objection by David Feather BSc, DIC, Dip H&T

My objection is to the overall soundness of the proposals for Trowbridge Community Area and I request that all the sites in the Area are removed from the Plan, for the following reasons:-

1 Population Density

1.1 The proposals will result in a serious over-development of the Trowbridge Community Area (TCA). Currently TCA has the highest population density of all CAs in the authority's area. You will see from the attached table that I estimate that the population density for TCA is now around 1200 people per sq km. Salisbury is higher but this applies to just the City (as I understand the data from Wiltshire's websites). Otherwise the next densest is Chippenham, well below, at around 400 by now. To add to the contrast, TCA has been planned for a 36% increase in population by 2026, well above any other area.

1.2 I understood that Town and Country Planning was about land use planning. However, I believe that WC planners, in devising WHSAP, have sadly been driven by the need to provide homes and forgotten to examine the environment that would result. If you examine the sketch map attached it can be seen that there is very little open land left between developments. The policy in the Wiltshire Core Strategy is to maintain a gap between the town of Trowbridge and the surrounding villages. This appears to be threatened without any justification other than the pressure to provide housing.

1.3 Too dense housing is not good for health. Researchers from the University of Uppsala in Sweden looked into the effect of housing density on mental health. Their report was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA on 25 February 2019: (<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1807504116>). They found "Growing up in urban environments is associated with risk of developing psychiatric disorders, but the underlying mechanisms are unknown. Green space can provide mental health benefits and possibly lower risk of psychiatric disorders. This nation-wide study covering >900,000 people shows that children who grew up with the lowest levels of green space had up to 55% higher risk of developing a psychiatric disorder independent from effects of other known risk factors. Stronger association between cumulated green space and risk during childhood constitutes evidence that prolonged presence of green space is important. Our results show that green space during childhood is associated with better mental health, supporting efforts to better integrate natural environments into urban planning and childhood life." Now that this potential problem has been identified it should be considered by our planners. If they don't do this then it is storing up problems for the future. Perhaps it's a "Grenfell tower" moment?

1.4 An additional concern over Public Health is the recommendation from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence that new homes should be built away from polluted busy roads. Their advice should now be included in planning housing.

2 Ecology

2.1 The Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy has only just been published for Public Consultation. From this it is clear that this Supplementary Policy will have a significant effect on development in the TCA. There is a strong possibility that it will inhibit house building in some of the WHSAP sites. A decision on all sites within TCA should be deferred.

2.2 The draft TBMS is remiss in its view of the Southwick Country Park. It is proposed to have it designated as a Local Nature Reserve and is completely unsuitable as a leisure mitigation site (as the draft TBMS proposes). A site such as H2.4, Church Lane, Trowbridge, adjacent to such a sensitive ecological site as Southwick Country Park and the Lambrok stream should not be

considered. Housing houses cats as well as humans and research shows that cats are extremely good at killing and deterring wildlife. The HRA of this site should have referred to this aspect.

3 New Considerations

3.1 North Bradley Parish Council is consulting on a Neighbourhood Plan which proposes 65 units of accommodation. This should mean over 100 extra residents.

3.2 A further new element has been introduced into the housing considerations. Planning applications 19/01712/PNCOU and 19/01841/PNCOU propose to convert office buildings in the White Horse Business Park into housing accommodation, approximately 70 units. I assume this will house around 150 people. This in itself should mean a reconsideration of the development of land adjacent to the White Horse Business Park.

4 Conclusion

4.1 Overall, I hope I have demonstrated that the proposals for the Trowbridge Community Area should be deferred with a need for them to be substantially reviewed.

David Feather

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Wiltshire Community Areas – Population Density Analysis

Community Area	Population in 2011	Area Sq kms	Population per sq km	Expected homes provision 2006 to 2026	Increase %
Amesbury	33190	281	118	2745	17
BoA	17420	53	329	780	9
Calne	22710	117	194	1605	14
Chippenham	44730	130	344	5090	23
Corsham	19960	75	266	1395	14
Devizes	31190	204	153	2500	16
Malmesbury	19120	209	91	1395	15
Marlborough	17890	253	71	920	10
Melksham	28330	93	305	2370	17
Mere	5660	102	55	285	10
Pewsey	13580	262	52	600	9
Salisbury	39730	16	2483		
Southern Wiltshire	17110	213	80	615	7
Trowbridge	41380	36	1149	6975	34
Tidworth	16760	159	105	1920	23
Tisbury	7570	144	53	420	11
Warminster	25070	273	92	2060	16
Westbury	19290	75	257	1615	17
Wilton	9580	133	72		
Wootton Bassett	28650	143	200	1455	10
Total	458920	2971	154		
Salisbury	39730	16			
Southern Wiltshire	17110	213			
Sub total	56840	229	248		
Salisbury and Wilton	49310			6315	

7 Trowbridge
34 Community Area
23 Development
11 Locations
16 Red chain
17 dotted
10 line
shows
Communi

ty Area boundary
Purple areas show concentrated developments
Green areas show reasonably open landscape



