

Response to the WHSAP Inspection 3rd April 2019

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Matter 3: Housing Site Allocations

Issue 5: Are the proposed sites justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

The following questions apply to all allocations:

5.1 Does the plan provide sufficient detail on form, scale, access and quantity of development for each site?

No, the revised plan was not available at the time of this response to the inspection. The reversal of the intent to appropriate the QEII field, now leaves unclear the latest proposed changes to the Elm Grove development and its situation boundaries.

5.2 Is the amount of development proposed for each site justified having regard to any constraints and the provision of necessary infrastructure?

The costs of mitigating the risk of flooding to a portion of the proposed Elm Grove development using cut and fill from the area adjacent to the QEII field can only be assessed when the number of proposed dwellings is, yet again, re-stated after the latest update to the revised quantum.

5.3 What is the likely impact of the proposed development on the following factors and do any of these indicate that the site should not be allocated:

- landscape quality and character;

Ref 5.14 below;

- strategic and local infrastructure including transport;
- the efficient operation of the transport network, highway safety.
- air and water quality, noise pollution, odours, land stability, groundwater and flood risk;

Air pollution and noise will certainly increase with the extra volume of traffic on the existing roads, such as Wiltshire Drive. However this can be partly mitigated with appropriate access to the A363, together with the traffic measures on the eastern boundary of the Elm Grove development.

- open space, recreational facilities and public rights of way.

Refer to 5.14 below.

5.14 For Site H2.1, what, if any, are the implications for allocation and delivery of the site associated with Queen Elizabeth II Field?

The environment of Queen Elizabeth II field represents one of the few areas of land within the increasing urban density of Trowbridge, which is available for multiple uses, including the exercise of dogs, which are a common pet for the elderly and contribute to the wellbeing of the population of this area. The Queen Elizabeth II field is an area of natural green space, dedicated for a specific purpose in perpetuity and needs to be honoured and protected.

There are no other areas available for this amenity within a reasonable walking distance. The QEII field remains a valued asset for residents despite poor maintenance. The lack of use of the play equipment is partly due to the increasing age profile of local residents, while the poor drainage is also a result of a poor standard of regular maintenance.

The possible loss of wild life that the open space of the field allows to exist, is enjoyed by both young and old. Foxes, deer, hedgehogs, bats, all the common birds, plus herons, storks and hawks. All very exciting and educational for those who never get the chance to go to the actual countryside.

Open space events have been featured in the past by Trowbridge Council and these provide a way of integrating new communities with established one. The lack of a particular recreational label allows the field to retain its identity as a natural environment within the constraints of the urban landscape.

The essentially open nature of the field provides a natural space unconstrained by any particular objectives. An open landscape can provide vested interests an opportunity in promoting a particular agenda or bias without representation by alternative and, or existing stake-holders. This can lead to a boring characterisation of overly manicured urban landscape.

Planning by Coulston and its agents has sought to take advantage of the QEII field as partly, a spill-over to the needs of the new residents of Elm Grove, assuming, for example, that a football pitch is a prime requirement. The needs and preferences of existing residents have not been canvassed, while that of the inhabitants of the new builds can only be suggested without proper consultation.

It follows that Wiltshire Council's perception of the role of the Queen Elizabeth II field in relation to the Elm Grove development should instead be viewed as an asset controlled by Trowbridge Town council and its existing, and, future users.

The WHSAP Sustainability Appraisal Report (Atkins SA Obj 7) includes the objective to; *'Conserve and enhance the character and quality of Wiltshire's rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place'*.

Dennis Kidd, Stan Zych, representatives.