

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

24 March 2020

Question from Kim Stuckey about Agenda Item 13 Future Chippenham Update

To Councillor Philip Whitehead Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development

The land in question is not in the development plans for the current Core Strategy, it was specifically rejected in the Chippenham Site Allocation Plan (CSAP).

By proceeding with the HIF implementation, Wiltshire Council is predetermining the allocation of sites in the next planning phase, before any public consultation or examination in public.

Question 1

Why is this being done and is it contrary to Section 25 of the Localism Act 2011?"

Response

The Council in its role as landowner and promoter of the Future Chippenham HIF bid is acting in accordance with all current legislative requirements and will continue to do so throughout the process. The Council has been awarded a grant of £75m from MHCLG for Housing Infrastructure Funding. This must be applied specifically to construct infrastructure that enables the delivery of housing to address the County's housing needs over many years to come. The Council is now negotiating terms and conditions with Homes England to sign a contract that will first of all secure the grant for use by the Council and secondly will govern how the grant is used. This process is expected to be complete by the end of 2020, current circumstances permitting

There is no predetermination possible in this scenario. It will be an express condition of the contract with Homes England that planning permission must be obtained for both the road to be funded by the HIF grant and subsequently for housing developments as they come forward. The planning process is entirely separate from the Council's team working on the Future Chippenham HIF award, and has governance measures in place to ensure and maintain that separation.

Any landowner can make a planning application on any piece of land at any time. They do not have to own it, nor does it have to be in a Core Strategy or Local Plan.

MHCLG are aware of the status of the land forming part of the Future Chippenham scheme and are reflecting this in the terms and conditions to which the Council will be expected to commit.

When the Future Chippenham scheme does submit its planning applications all normal public consultation and examinations in public will take place as part of that process. The scheme will be subject to every discipline and requirement to which any and every application is subject, and will have to win approval on its own merits.