

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

21 January 2025

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Questions from Cllr Richard Budden

To

Cllr Richard Clewer - Leader of the Council

Statement

Stone Circle Development Company: The Old Sports Centre, Tisbury
In plans drawn up over eleven years ago¹ for the development of the community centre now known as the Nadder Centre, the site of the Sports Centre serving the former Tisbury middle school was designated a wildflower meadow. However, Wiltshire Council wished to dispose of the site for housing, to maximise its return, and chose to include this as one of a small number of Council-owned properties to be sold for development by the Stone Circle Development Company (SCDC).

The designation of the site (in the Tisbury Neighbourhood Plan) for community-based uses, such as community-led homes, was accommodated in plans that were submitted and approved in 2022². This accommodation was achieved, with the support of the West Tisbury and Tisbury Parish Councils, following discussions and an agreement reached between SCDC and the Nadder Community Land Trust (NCLT), acting on behalf of the community.

Since mid-2023 I have followed the affairs of SCDC closely, attending shareholder meetings and participating in the Stone Circle Governance Task Group. But there has been no progress on the Tisbury project, and no work has been carried out on the site.

In early December there was a shareholders' meeting that I was unable to attend. However, at a meeting of West Tisbury Parish Council a few days later I learned that trustees of NCLT understood SCDC's management had received and assessed contractors' bids, that a choice was to be made and confirmed at the meeting I missed, and that work was finally due to start imminently.

Apart from a reference to a verbal update, the draft minutes of the shareholders' meeting on 3rd December provide no information on the progress of SCDC or its projects.

¹ 14/04907/FUL

² PL/2022/00855

Question (25-1Q)

Please clarify the status of the Stone Circle Development Company following the recent meeting of shareholders, and specifically its intentions regarding the site in Tisbury.

Can I be assured that undertakings given to the residents of Tisbury, including those acting as trustees of NCLT, before, during and since plans for the site were submitted and approved, regarding the number and quality of homes to be built on the site, and the arrangements between SCDC and NCLT for allocation of housing via the White Horse Housing Association will be honoured in full?

Response

There is a Shareholder Group scheduled for 27 January at which an update on the activity of the Stone Circle Development Company will be given including the Tisbury site. Councillors are welcome to attend the meeting.

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Questions from Cllr Derek Walters

To

Cllr Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport Assets

Statement

Wiltshire Council has offered a lease on the Rudloe Community Centre with a clawback clause after 2 years making any funding impossible to get.

Due to poor maintenance procedures (whilst in WC or GreenSquareAccord's hands) the Centre's heating system has been allowed to deteriorate so that it requires replacement.

The local community has found funding which would keep the Centre open for 5 years but the clawback conditions make that impossible to access.

A longer and more secure lease would unlock funding to reopen the Centre without claim on Wiltshire Council.

Surely this is a brilliant opportunity to deliver on a number of commitments at no cost. Wiltshire's Business Plan states that:

The people of Wiltshire are empowered to live full, healthy and enriched lives.

Question (25-2Q)

Will Wiltshire Council offer a more realistic lease so that the people of Rudloe can regain their Centre at the heart of their community?

Response

The Council is currently reviewing the Housing Revenue Account 30 year business plan, a feature of this review is greater cost pressure across housing services and escalating cost of the development programme, this will be reported to Cabinet in February. This has meant that the ability to deliver some of the anticipated land led schemes in the short term have had to be reviewed and thus reducing the ability to review new sites, such as Rudloe. The outcome of this is that any review and then potential development of the Rudloe site is now much further along in the programme, this creates the opportunity to indeed extend the proposed break clause from 2 years. Officers will discuss this with Rudloe Community Association as soon as possible.

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Questions from Andrew Nicolson

To

Cllr Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets

Questions (25-3Q)

1. While the Council's Draft LTP4 is out for consultation, so is the Subnational Transport Body's Strategic Investment Plan for Transport. Does the Council endorse that Plan, and if it differs from Wiltshire's LTP4, which plan will take priority?

Response

The council has been actively engaging to ensure Wiltshire's interests are represented within the Western Gateway Strategic Investment Plan (SIP), which is not intended to be a complete catalogue of all transport schemes in the region.

The Strategic Investment Plan complements the Wiltshire's Draft LTP4. Both have been developed in accordance with national policy.

The draft LTP4 is Wiltshire specific and sets out the strategic framework to ensure our local priorities are met. It recognises that there are national, regional and local partners which will be integral to delivering the Plan's objectives and this is set out on pages 20 and 70 of the Core Strategy. It is important to note that the Strategic Investment Plan is one of several plans that will support the delivery of LTP4. We will continue to work in partnership with external stakeholders, including government bodies and Western Gateway to improve transport in Wiltshire for all.

2. The Draft LTP4 consultation is set to close on 24 January. The WGSTB's SIP consultation is set to run until 2 February. Will the Council consider extending its consultation to finish on the same date?

Response

The draft Local Transport Plan (LTP4) consultation is due to run until 24th January. There are no plans to change this date.

3. Both the Council's Climate Emergency Task Group and its Environment Select Committee are unhappy that the Draft LTP4 consultation is timed to exclude them from considering it while it is under consultation. Is the Council prepared to prolong the consultation period so that those constitutional and democratic processes can take place?

Response

Whilst we acknowledge that further engagement could have been undertaken on preparing the plan, we have had meetings with the Climate Emergency Task Group and Environmental Select Committee during the consultation period. The most recent Environmental Select Committee meeting, held on 14 January 2025, received an update on the draft LTP4 including recommendations from the Climate Emergency Task Group. Further updates will be provided as LTP4 and the associated detailed delivery plans are developed.

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Questions from Andrew Wheeler

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Statement

The September 2023 Sustainability Appraisal (Para 5.12.6) listed six sites in Salisbury which were “*considered likely to have ‘major adverse effects’ whereby mitigation is considered to be unachievable.*” It recommended that these six sites should not be considered further in the selection process.

This included Site 12 (Land at Quidhampton Quarry) which was considered to have “*major adverse effects’ likely on biodiversity and transport/highways grounds.*” Further details were provided at Annex 2.11 of the Sustainability Appraisal.

Question (25-4Q)

1. Biodiversity

Annex 2.11, under SA Objective 1: Biodiversity (Page 145/146), states that:

“The site, former Imerys Quarry, has been the subject of a detailed minerals restoration plan for biodiversity post chalk extraction. The site is already well on the way to reaching the restoration goals meaning biodiversity of the site is likely to be high and would qualify as a County Wildlife Site.”

“Given the site is already well on the way to reaching the restoration goals, it is likely that the development area will need to be compensated for entirely off-site. The area required for offsetting will be significantly larger than that lost to development accounting for the various allowances noted above.” “Additional land will be required to achieve biodiversity net gain; mitigation would therefore not be possible to achieve on site.”

I would be grateful if the Council would explain the statement, “*The site is already well on the way to reaching the restoration goals...*”, given that no restoration work has commenced? Could the Council also provide details of these restoration goals, given that the restoration plan (which has not been implemented) would have involved filling a significant part of the Quarry with material to create a ‘development area’ of almost 4ha.

Given the lack of restoration work, does the Council agree that the further statement, "...*meaning biodiversity of the site is likely to be high and would qualify as a County Wildlife Site*", is incorrect? Similarly, is the follow-on statement also incorrect: "*Additional land will be required to achieve biodiversity net gain; mitigation would therefore not be possible to achieve on site.*"? In any event, would the Council agree that off-site compensation is an acceptable approach to biodiversity net gain?

If one or both of these statements are incorrect, does this affect the overall score for SA Objective 1?

Furthermore, could the Council confirm whether an Ecological Assessment, for example a Phase 1 Habitats Assessment, was undertaken to inform the 'major adverse effect' assessment for SA Objective 1? If not, why and what evidence supports this assessment? The SA assumes high populations of protected species and the need for translocations. Given that this assumption is made only in respect to the Quarry site and no other, has this consideration been applied fairly to other sites? If so, please can the Council provide details/evidence.

2. Access

Annex 2.11 also provides details of the assessment for SA Objective 11: Transport/Highways (from Page 155), with 'access' (Para 2) being the primary factor behind the 'major adverse effect' conclusion. Under the heading "Western Way Access Opportunities", it states that: "*This access option is preferable*" and then sets out the issues which would require mitigation which appear surmountable.

However, the Summary (Page 158) makes no mention of the preferred "Western Way Access Opportunities" but instead summarises only the challenges associated with the least preferred option (i.e. the "Wilton Road (A36) Access").

On this basis, does the Council agree that the Summary does not reflect fully the earlier narrative, and hence the '*major adverse effect*' assessment, is incorrect? If not, then please can you explain why?

Furthermore, the narrative at Para 2 of SA Objective 11 appears to be out of date, in that it doesn't reflect the proposed enhancements to the Western Way access 'preferred option' as detailed in the Regulation 14 version of the Salisbury Neighbourhood Development Plan (SNDP) that was consulted on between July - September 2023. These enhancements included a one-way scheme and parking on Western Way and enhancements to the Pembroke Road junction. Mitigation measures were also proposed to the Roman Road access to the A36.

Given this, has the SA Objective 11 assessment properly considered the proposed Western Way access? If not, then is the '*major adverse effect*' assessment correct?

Would the Council provide a copy of the transport assessment that underpins the narrative at Para 2 of SA Objective 11? If not, then please explain why this information cannot be shared with the public?

I note the section in the Sustainability Appraisal (Para 2.3.5) relating to 'methodology' and the statement that "*The principal technique used to assess the significance of effects is a qualitative assessment based on expert judgement and supported by specific evidence.*" But, given the apparent lack of evidence and/or omission of specific evidence that would have otherwise favoured allocation of the Quarry (e.g. realistic access options), what methodology was used to determine the 'major adverse effect' assessment?

Finally, I would be grateful if the Council would explain why the Sustainability Appraisal assessment fails to acknowledge the employment allocation in the existing adopted Core Strategy, and long-standing acceptance for the creation of a development platform?

Response

Thank you for your questions, which are detailed comments in relation to the evidence informing the Local Plan. On 28 November 2024, the Local Plan was submitted for independent examination. An Inspector has now been appointed. The representations received at the Regulation 19 stage and evidence informing the Plan, including Sustainability Appraisal, will be given due consideration by the Inspector through their examination of the Plan. The Inspector will examine if the Wiltshire Local Plan meets the tests of soundness defined in the National Planning Policy Framework and meets relevant legislative requirements. As such it would be inappropriate to comment on the matters raised outside of the examination process.

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Questions from Andrew Wheeler

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Statement 1

Land at Fugglestone Red

Persimmon Homes state, in their Regulation 19 representation, that they made it clear, in their Regulation 18 representation, that:

“... it was explained that whilst residential delivery has been very successful, employment land remains undeveloped. The opportunities to deliver the full employment quantum (8ha) is no longer considered to be a realistic or achievable outcome, with the 2021 representations highlighting that at least 5.5ha of the total 8ha should be considered for alternative (residential uses), with the remaining 2.5ha retained for small-scale employment uses appropriate to its residential setting”.

They also state in their Regulation 19 representation that: “The 2021 Local Plan representations submitted by Persimmon Homes appear to have been ignored and this is considered a serious failing of the Plan as it fails to accurately consider the limitations on land at Fugglestone Red to deliver the employment originally envisaged.”

Question (25-5Q)

1. Does the Council agree that the 2021 Representation “has been ignored”?

Response

No, all representations submitted during the 2021 representation have been considered.

Statement 2

The Regulation 19 representation includes details of a marketing campaign conducted between December 2021 and December 2022. The campaign’s final report concluded that there was a “high risk of non-delivery and as such the retention of this land for employment must be re-appraised.” Their representation further states that, contrary to the ‘medium’ assessment in the September 2023 Employment Land Review, “Demand does not automatically translate into the take up of available employment land; this depends on location, neighbouring uses and the requirements of end users.”

2. Given this, is the "high-risk" assessment correct? If not, what evidence supports the 'medium' assessment in the Employment Land Review?

Response

The Local Plan has been submitted for examination and an Inspector appointed. This is one of many representations on the plan. The representations received at the Regulation 19 stage and evidence informing the Plan will be given due consideration by the Inspector through their examination of the Plan.

3. Additionally, considering the demand for housing in Salisbury - a constrained settlement – and the fact that the Council has been aware of this alternative proposal since March 2021, with further evidence provided in the December 2022 Marketing Survey, why hasn't the Council promoted this site for residential use and included an allocation in the Local Plan?

Response

We have set out our proposals within the Local Plan for both housing and employment development. Whilst the demand for housing is understood this needs to be balanced with making provision for other land uses that support the sustainability of our settlements and meet the wider needs of communities including access to jobs.

4. Was it therefore a mistake to exclude this site at Stage 1 of the Sustainability Appraisal process?

Response

No. See above response.

5. Finally, does the Council now support the proposals in the Persimmon Homes Masterplan, submitted as part of their Regulation 19 representation, for 100 homes to be developed on this parcel of land? If so, does this site have potential for an even greater number of homes?

Response

No. See above response.

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Questions from Annabel Lawson

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Question (25-6Q)

Please may we know/see:

1. the plan for the Persimmon's proposed development for Site 6 (Policy 26)

Response

Persimmon's representations on the Local Plan, which has now been submitted for examination are a matter of public record and can be viewed via the council's website.

2. when the copy of the statement of common ground for Site 6 (Policy 26) be available to view for the public.

Response

This is in the process of being finalised and will be made available on the council's website in the coming weeks.

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Questions from Sally Ross

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Question (25-7Q)

1. In the past 10 years (or the relevant period used for evidence gathering), how many affordable homes have been built in Wiltshire and Salisbury?

Response

Completions for the financial years 2014-2024 (1 April 2014 – 31 March 2024):

Salisbury = 548

Wiltshire = 5865

2. What level of affordable housing is envisaged for Site 8 (Policy 27) and Site 9 (Policy 28)?

Response

40% affordable housing is envisaged for these site allocation proposals in the Local Plan in line with Policy 76 (Providing affordable homes).

3. If the level is not 40% as required by Policy 76 of the Local Plan, could the Council explain why and specify the revised target, particularly given that these sites are not brownfield, where viability is typically a concern?

Response

The level of housing at 40% is considered to be achievable.

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Questions from Tom McInerney

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Statement

In December 2024 the Labour government confirmed in changes to the National Planning Performance Framework (NPPF) an increase of 3,525 or 84% in Wiltshire's annual housing target. The Wiltshire Council draft Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration in November 2024.

Question (25-8Q)

What is the effective current impact of the increase in the housing target on the Five-Year Land Supply and what impact will this have on the consideration of planning applications? Will a future adoption of the draft Local Plan have an impact on the 5YLS?

Response

The revised NPPF took effect for the purpose of decision-making from its day of publication. As such, Wiltshire is required to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, including a 5% buffer based on the government's standard method set out in national planning practice guidance for calculating local housing need. The recalculation of housing land supply based on this requirement shows a significant reduction in the number of years supply at 2.03 years. This significant shortfall will carry weight when planning applications for housing are assessed. Briefing Note 24-20 provides further information.

The transitional arrangements for the purposes of plan-making are set out in Annex 1 of the December NPPF. They clarify that the Local Plan will be examined under the relevant previous version of the NPPF and its associated housing numbers, which will be the September 2023 version. As such, the adoption of the emerging Local Plan following its examination by the appointed Inspector will have an impact on five-year land supply.

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Questions from Tim Guy

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Statement

Transparency & Fairness

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 clearly require the Regulation 22(1)(c) Consultation Statement to include:

- “a summary of the main issues raised by the representations made pursuant to regulation 18” (Para iii); and,
- “how any representations made pursuant to regulation 18 have been taken into account” (Para iv).

Regulation 18 further states that: “In preparing the local plan, the local planning authority must take into account any representation made to them in response to invitations under paragraph (1)” (Para 3 refers).”

The Council will be aware that Sites 8 & 9 (Policy 27 & Policy 28 in the emerging Local Plan) were not consulted on at the Regulation 18 stage. Indeed, the 2021 ‘Planning for Salisbury’ document makes no mention of Site 8 or 9.

Although the Town and Country Planning (Local planning) (England) Regulations 2012 do not explicitly prohibit the inclusion of sites in a Regulation 19 Local Plan that were not consulted on at the Regulation 18 stage, it seems critical for transparency and fairness that the Inspector appointed to examine the Local Plan to be informed of such omissions. This is especially relevant for Sites 8 & 9 given the significant number of objections (2,800 representations), which accounted for approximately 30% of all representations raised against the Local Plan across Wiltshire, and the obligations for transparency in the Council’s own Statement of Community Involvement.

Question (25-9Q)

1. Given this, why did the Council not explicitly cover this omission in Section 2 of the Regulation 22(1)(c) consultation document, explaining why these sites were excluded from the Regulation 18 consultation, especially considering the significant number of objections and Para iv above? Why also was this not covered in the 'Main Issues' section of the Regulation 22(1)(c) document, either in the 'Main Issues' part or the 'Council Response'?
2. Has the Council informed the Inspector about this omission and the number of objections?
3. If not, then please can the Council explain why they feel this hasn't been necessary without referring to procedural requirements?"

Response

The Council considers that it has complied with procedural requirements and regulations. The Local Plan has been submitted for examination and an Inspector appointed. Their role is to assess the soundness of the Local Plan and legal compliance. The Examination website contains documentation that is before the Inspector, which includes the consultation reports on the 2021 consultations.

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Questions from Tim Guy

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Cllr Tamara Reay – Cabinet Member for Transport and Assets

Statement

Firstly, thank you again for your comprehensive reply to my questions for the 19 November and 10 December Cabinet meetings. Your comprehensive responses have helped me understand the situation regarding traffic/transport in Salisbury.

I would be grateful if you would respond to some follow-up questions.

Salisbury Junction Improvements Project

In your response to my question at the 19 November Cabinet, you stated that £2,929,146 of funds (£1,377,783 of CIL contributions and Section 106 funds of £1,551,363) had been secured against the £2.5m costs for the ‘Salisbury Junction Improvements’ project and that work is expected to start in 2025.

Question (25-10 Q)

1. Would you be able to provide an update on costs, funding, and timescales for the project?

Response

Wiltshire Council are currently undertaking an Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) exercise, to better understand the likely costs and programme for delivering the scheme. Commencement of the scheme is planned to follow on from the completion of the Station Forecourt scheme and could be as early as summer 2025 and is likely to have a timescale in the order of 10 months, although this will be confirmed through the current ECI.

Local Plan Traffic Growth to 2038

“Wider Measures”

In your response to my question at the 19 November Cabinet, you stated that:

“Further and more detailed modelling of the A338 Salisbury Junctions scheme is provided on pages 23, 24 and 25 and concludes that works to the junctions are necessary for the mitigation of the Local Plan and despite this, additional delays of 39

*seconds will occur for New Harnham Road and an additional 25 seconds will occur for Coombe Road and thus **wider measures** within the Transport Strategy will need to be brought forward to support the scheme.”*

2. Given these additional delays, I would be grateful if you could confirm what the “wider measures” necessary to support Local Plan traffic growth to 2038 entail, their estimated cost, and the timeline for their implementation.

Response

The Salisbury Transport Strategy sets out a list of 5 Smarter Choices schemes, 12 Pedestrian and Cycle schemes, 9 Public Transport schemes and 16 Highway and Parking schemes, including Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street junctions. The total cost of delivering the full strategy amounts to £32,322,912 in 2018 prices. Delivery of the strategy remains ongoing.

In addition to the ‘Strategy’, a draft Salisbury Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has been published and this builds upon the measures developed in the ‘Strategy’. A Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) has also been adopted by the Council and also includes public transport measures pertinent to Salisbury. Costs for delivering the LCWIP and BSIP have not been calculated exclusive of those measures within the Strategy, with many yet to be fully determined.

Finally, the Local Plan will also be supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which will itemise strategic measures from each of the policy documents and elements identified through the Sustainability Appraisal as being necessary to support individual allocations. The IDP will incorporate costs of delivery, however these will be high level to reflect the early stage of design for many of the schemes.

3. Additionally, could you clarify whether the existing infrastructure would be insufficient to support Local Plan traffic growth to 2038 without these “wider measures”?

Response

The traffic modelling outputs, without modal shift applied through delivery of the Strategy, illustrate capacity implications for Salisbury highway network arising with Core Strategy and wider strategic growth through to 2038, with only limited change applied through application of the Local Plan. Without the Local Plan and without application of the Strategy, a number of road links are shown to exceed their theoretical 100% capacity and thus do require mitigation measures to accommodate further growth applied by the Local Plan. In this scenario (i.e. without application of the wider Strategy), local highway infrastructure would be considered insufficient to support Local Plan traffic growth.

Vehicle/Capacity

You also stated in the 19 November response:

“The more detailed reports held on the website provide a series of metrics for the Salisbury Junctions scheme and strategic modelling. For the junctions scheme, microsimulation modelling has been utilised for the assessment of a network of multiple junctions and isolating a volume to capacity for an entire network is not

precise and not used. The operation of the network is however compared against a baseline and a do-minimum forecast traffic scenarios, with the operation presented as a function of journey time, average speed and delay.”

4. If vehicle/capacity % is not used, then why does Appendix A to the Transport Topic Paper use this as the preferred method of displaying capacity at both key junctions (Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street roundabout) and across a network (Para 6.4.3 Salisbury HMA and Figure 6-13)?

Response

Figure 6-13 presents an output from the strategic modelling and illustrates Volume to Capacity (V/C) ratios of individual links, which represent roads. An alternative output is available that isolates metrics for individual ‘nodes’, which form part of a junction, e.g. a stop line. From the Strategic modelling, it is very difficult to isolate the entire capacity of a network (e.g. a series of junctions and roads), as the limiting factor is likely to be a less consequential node or link that does not represent the whole; an example of this is a small spur served from The Avenue to the west of Salisbury, as illustrated in Fig 6-13, which reaches 98% V/C in the Do Minimum scenario, and yet does not present a limiting factor for the entire network due to its lack of connectiveness. More detailed analysis of the operation of the Salisbury Junctions scheme is included in Appendix B of the Transport Topic Paper, which provides detailed modelling output for the network representing Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street junctions; the model is presented as VISSIM, which does not provide a Volume to Capacity ratio for the entire network.

Figure 6-13 (Link V/C%: 2038 Core vs. 2038 DM (AM peak hour) - Salisbury HMA) shows that these two junctions will exceed 100% capacity. Para 6.4.3 also states that:

“However, there are locations where capacity constraints are predicted to slightly worsen:

- *The A354 (Coombe Road) on approach to the Odstock Road junction (eastbound: 86% to 102%).*
- *Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street roundabout are already predicted to be operating at capacity in the Core scenario, which will likely worsen with increased demand associated with the LPR (2024).”*

5. Does Figure 6-13 (annotated as ‘2038 DM’) and the statements above reflect the improvements associated with implementation of the ‘Salisbury Junction Improvements’ project, set out in Appendix B and referred to as ‘DS2 2038’. If not, please could you explain why, and whether Appendix A is incorrect?

Response

Paragraph 6.4.3 presents a commentary upon Figure 6-13 which compares the 2038 Core (No Local Plan, No Mitigation) scenario and the 2038 Do Minimum (With Local Plan, No Mitigation, No Salisbury Junctions scheme) scenario. Appendix B presents the Salisbury Junctions scheme as mitigation for the Local Plan and is incorporated in a Do Something Option 2 scenario. For clarity, Appendix A presents the impact of the Local Plan against projected traffic flows (without Salisbury Transport Strategy) in

2038, whereas Appendix B seeks to mitigate the impact of the Local Plan through the application of the Salisbury Junctions scheme.

Junction Capacity

In your response to my 10 December question, you stated that, despite the Sustainability Appraisal reflecting 2026 and not 2038 transport modelling data, that the -2 'moderate adverse' effect (e.g., mitigation achievable but problematic) remains correct. You stated that:

“Each of the three sites [6, 8 and 9] have been identified as imparting a moderate adverse effect, e.g. mitigation achievable but problematic. The assessment considered multi-modal access for the sites, raising concern for walkable/cyclable routes to the city centre and traffic impacts at Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street roundabouts.

Walking and cycling routes may be enhanced through developer contributions and delivery of the Salisbury Transport Strategy and a future revision of the strategy, but walking distances will not be reduced and topography will not change. In order to mitigate the walking and cycling accessibility concerns, sites were considered against existing and potential public transport connectivity and developer contributions will be sought to enhance bus accessibility for sites 8 and 9; site 6 has relatively good walking and cycling accessibility and is opposite Britford Park and Ride.

With regards to traffic impacts, sites 6, 8 and 9 rely upon the delivery of the proposed capacity enhancements at Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street roundabout, without which the sites would be considered to impart a 'major adverse' impact. The updated transport modelling does not present a 'severe' impact following the implementation of the Salisbury Junctions Improvements scheme.”

You state that *“The updated transport modelling does not present a 'severe' impact following the implementation of the Salisbury Junctions Improvements scheme.”*

6. Please can you explain what you mean by 'severe' and how is this defined, especially given that you have already confirmed that the Harnham Gyratory and Exeter Street roundabout junctions will exceed 85% vehicle/capacity, that Figure 6-13 and Para 6.43 demonstrate vehicle/capacity of >100%, and that the definition of 'severe' appears to be clear at Para 6.4 of Appendix A:

*“Link Volume / Capacity (V/C) analysis provides an indication of network capacity constraints as a result of increased demand associated with the LPR (2024). A link V/C (%) ratio of greater than 85% suggests the potential for **severe** capacity constraints in the highway network.” (Para 6.4 of Appendix A).*

Response

The use of the term 'severe' stems from paragraph 116 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)(2024), which states: *'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios'.*

Unfortunately, there is no further definition of severe and thus the application of the term can be considered subjective against a translation of available evidence.

Given the definition above, and the fact Appendix B confirms that, even considering the 'Salisbury Junction Improvements' project:

- Peak journey times on the Downton Road and Coombe Road to Exeter Street will increase by up to 46%.
- Peak delays at the Harnham Gyratory will increase on these roads by between 69% and 88%.
- Peak queue lengths at the Harnham Gyratory will increase on these roads by over 145%, with New Harnham Road increasing by 275% (PM).
- The 'Salisbury Junction Improvements' project actually exacerbates the traffic situation on the Coombe Road and Downton Road approaching the Harnham Gyratory, rather than improving it.
- The Level of Service for the Coombe Road and New Harnham Road remain at F (the worst score).

7. Could the Council clarify why it does not consider the impact to be 'severe'?

Response

It is clear and true that individual metrics can be used to diminish the beneficial impact of the Salisbury Junctions scheme, however when considering the overall network performance across both junctions, delay is maintained at 2minutes 26 seconds, whilst conveying an additional 574 cars in the AM peak. It is recognised that this delay is a material increase upon the 2022 baseline assessment (1minute 35 seconds), but without the scheme it would reach 3minutes 35 seconds and thus the scheme ameliorates the impact of growth.

The context of the scheme also needs to be considered, which is to be deliverable within a cost envelope that does not present a burden to the taxpayer and is constrained within land available to the Highway Authority. Much larger schemes may prove more efficient and convey far more traffic, but these may not fit within the typical historical city context, meet robust cost benefit analysis, be deliverable within available land, be affordable or accord with the 'vision-led approach' as prescribed by paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

8. To this end, I would be grateful if you could clarify the threshold at which a junction is deemed unable to accommodate traffic demand in the context of Local Plan growth? Is this threshold defined by a vehicle/capacity exceeding 85% or 100%, or classified as 'severe' (as defined?), or other factors such as increases in journey times, delays, or queue lengths?

Response

The purpose of the Local Plan is to meet the long-term housing and employment needs, as set out in evidence, in a sustainable manner. The predicted impacts of meeting forecast development needs on the highway network informed the Sustainability Appraisal and site selection process.

The traffic modelling that underpins the Local Plan represents a Business-as-Usual scenario with limited application of mode shift. Additional modelling was then carried out to determine the impact of sustainable transport interventions (such as the Salisbury Transport Strategy), the application of which was then assessed to determine the carbon footprint of the Local Plan's traffic growth.

Whilst highway capacity has presented a concern through the Local Plan assessment, it is considered reasonable and proportionate for more detailed assessment and determination of mitigation to be carried out through the subsequent development management process against individual planning applications and their consideration of wider committed growth.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

21 January 2025

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Questions from Geraint Dingley

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Statement

Local Plan - Sustainability Appraisal

The Sustainability Appraisal (September 2023) provides an 'overall site score' for sustainability in tables titled: "Summary of the assessment of ...[settlement/area]. sites (in order of sustainability performance)." One such example is Table 5.22: Summary of the assessment of Salisbury and Laverstock sites (in order of sustainability performance).

Question (25-11 Q)

1. On reviewing the Sustainability Appraisal, it appears that any site receiving one or more -3 'major adverse effect' ratings is excluded from further consideration in the site selection process. Is this correct?
2. If not, could the Council provide an example of a site that has been advanced despite receiving a 'major adverse effect' rating?
3. Additionally, is there an overall negative sustainability score threshold -regardless of whether a 'major adverse effect' ratings has been included - beyond which the Council deems a site unviable from a sustainability perspective? For instance, would a score of -11, or -12, or 13 disqualify a site?
4. Finally, are the answers to these questions detailed in the Site Selection Methodology (September 2023)? If not, could the Council explain why this information has not been included?

Response

The Local Plan has been submitted for examination and an Inspector appointed. The representations received at the Regulation 19 stage and evidence informing the Plan including the Sustainability Appraisal and Site Selection Methodology will be given due consideration by the Inspector through their examination of the Plan.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

21 January 2025

Agenda Item 5 – Public Participation and Questions from Councillors

Questions from Colin Gale

To

**Cllr Nick Botterill – Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management
and Strategic Planning**

Statement

Housing Land Supply & NPPF

At full council on 15th October 2024 the status of Wiltshire Councils Land Supply was debated and it was identified that WC were only able to demonstrate a 3.85 year housing land supply.

The Wiltshire Council updated Local Plan was pushed through in November 2024 and submitted for inspection to try and avoid the government updated housing figures which would be an increase of approximately 80% of housing numbers. The expectation being that this would buy Wiltshire Council time to challenge the proposed government housing figures and plan for the potential uplift in house building and development in the future. On the 12th December the government issued the new NPPF with the revised housing requirements for Wiltshire. On the 17th December 2024, Wiltshire Council issued Briefing Note 24-20 which identifies that based on the governments new NPPF, Wiltshire Council could only demonstrate a 2.03 year land supply. The briefing note is unclear on the impact and the footnote identifies buffers that WC will need to implement.

Question (25-12 Q)

1. Please can Wiltshire Council clearly identify the impact on the submitted Local Plan and the housing number that Wiltshire Council are now applying?

Response

See response below, the submitted Local Plan will not be examined against the new housing requirements.

2. What is the status now of the Local Plan and is Wiltshire Council still applying the old NPPF or has Wiltshire Council got to apply the new NPPF as issued on 12th December 2024?

Response

The transitional arrangements for the purposes of plan-making are set out in Annex 1 of the December NPPF. They clarify that the Local Plan will be examined under the relevant previous version of the NPPF and its associated housing numbers, which will be the September 2023 version.

This is because the Local Plan was submitted for examination on 28 November 2024, which is before 12 March 2025 (see paragraph 234 b, December NPPF).

However, as the housing requirement in the plan to be adopted is less than 80% of local housing need (using the standard method in national planning practice guidance, published on 12 December 2024) the local planning authority will be expected to begin work on a new plan, under the revised plan-making system provided for under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (as soon as the relevant provisions are brought into force in 2025), in order to address the shortfall in housing need.