

From: Clampitt-dix, Georgina
Sent: 20 March 2019 09:29
To: Richell, Alan <Alan.Richell@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Cc: Cunningham, Alistair <Alistair.Cunningham@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Subject: Housing Infrastructure Fund - Forward Funding Bid

Dear Alan,

I write to set out our comments in relation to the Council's Housing Infrastructure Fund(HIF) bid for Chippenham.

The scheme has a close fit with Chippenham's wider development plan context and will enable the upfront delivery of strategic infrastructure that is necessary to unlock future growth of the town.

Chippenham is designated as a Principal Settlement in the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, one of just three such settlements in Wiltshire. They are strategically important centres and the primary focus for growth in the County (Core Policy 1, Wiltshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, adopted January 2015). It is expected that Chippenham will continue to provide significant levels of new homes and jobs, together with supporting community facilities and infrastructure into the future.

The Chippenham Site Allocations Plan (adopted May 2017) allocates large scale mixed use, strategic sites, at the town. These sites have been planned to allow for a longer term pattern of growth at the town. The Plan's proposals safeguard the potential for future road alignments to the east and south, clearly indicating a need arising in the future for strategic road infrastructure improvements. Whilst preparing the Plan it was recognised that any future longer-term pattern of development would include roads to bridge the River Avon and link the A350 and A4, to unlock future phases of strategic housing growth, and maintain the resilience of the town's highway network to prevent unacceptable congestion and harm to the town centre (see Position Statement - [Improving highway network resilience at Chippenham](#)).

Work is underway to review the Wiltshire Core Strategy for the plan period 2016 to 2036. An employment land review reports that there is more market interest in Chippenham than any other town in the County, with business reporting a shortage of available land, and scope for more land to be allocated for new business and the expansion of existing employers (see [Wiltshire Employment Land Review](#)). The town has excellent transport links, being in close proximity to the M4, the A350 and is located on the main Bristol to London railway route. It will benefit further from electrification of the railway. This locational strength is a distinct reason for the town's important economic position. It is a focus for growth capitalising on the towns access to the M4 corridor, London and wider markets.

The Council's strategic housing land availability assessment shows a considerable amount of land being put forward by developers and land owners in the area (see [Wiltshire Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment](#)). It is noted that all the land subject to the HIF bid is in this category. Work on housing needs has identified a housing market area centred on Chippenham (see [Swindon and Wiltshire Housing Market Area Assessment](#)). This evidence shows a step change increase in housing needs in the local area, an increase by more than 40%, in a wider context of continuing much the same or lower rates of house building elsewhere in the County.

Having taken into consideration the above factors, it is evident that there is a clear synergy between the ambition of the HIF bid to secure significant increases in housing at the town with current development plan strategy and its future direction.

Kind regards

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