

28 October 2016

Mr Patrick Whitehead
The Planning Inspectorate
3/12 Kite Wing
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Alistair Cunningham
Economic Development and Planning
County Hall
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Dear Mr Whitehead

Chippenham Site Allocation Plan - Resumed Examination in Public

Thank you for your letter of 12 October 2016.

Please find attached a List of Proposed Further Modifications to the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan arising from the discussions at the hearings and the ongoing examination. The list of further modifications includes both 'main' modifications' and 'additional' modifications in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The Proposed Further Modifications have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal, which is also attached.

In your letter of 12 October you asked the Council to give consideration to a number of textual changes in relation to Policy CH2. The Council's response to each is explained below.

The completed development shall include no more than 650 dwellings

This proposed modification has been included in Proposed Main Modification S118.

There shall be no physical development located within the area shown as country park on the accompanying plan (figure 5.2), nor to the east of the 50m contour

Figure 5.2 has been amended to include land within the 50m contour along the River Avon in the Country Park. Figure 5.2 has also been amended to include a small extension to the mixed use area within the line of the Cocklebury Link Road. This is to ensure the proposed mixed use area is sufficient to accommodate a low density development which respects the contours of the site and can achieve up to the proposed 650 homes. These changes are included in Proposed Main Modification S119.

In relation to the suggestion that no physical development should be located within the area known as country park, proposed Policy CH4 already includes the requirement that 'no new buildings or structures are built within flood risk areas' which will apply to the Rawlings Green proposed country park area. The phrasing was deliberate as new footpaths and cycleways could be classed as 'physical development' which may be needed for the enjoyment of the country park. Furthermore, the Country Parks, through Policy CH4, are envisaged as potential new areas for sports pitches which may require small ancillary buildings. Therefore the 'no new buildings or structures' requirement does not apply to areas outside those at risk of flooding. Instead Wiltshire Core Strategy policies, such as landscape and heritage, can be relied on to ensure a satisfactory form of development.

Proposed Modification S118 uses the same terminology (new buildings) included in Policy CH4 to apply to the whole of the Country Park whilst recognising that some ancillary buildings may be required to support the use of the Country Park. Adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy policies will ensure these would be appropriate in size and form to the local landscape.

Prior to the occupation of the 201st dwelling a tree belt at least 25m wide shall be established along the west bank of the River Avon

During the final hearing session on the 4 October 2016 you drew attention to the fact that the supporting text to Policy CH2 provided a more robust description of the landscaping requirements for the Rawlings Green site than was included in the policy itself. Paragraph 5.12 provides clear guidance on what should be included in a landscaping scheme for the site. Adopted policies in the Wiltshire Core Strategy usefully include references to specific paragraphs in the supporting text where they amplify the implementation of specific policy requirements. Proposed Main Modification S118 has incorporated this approach in relation to Rawlings Green to ensure there is proper consideration of site boundaries to Chippenham, the River Avon and wider countryside as well as internal landscaping to help screen and integrate the development with Chippenham.

This perhaps goes further than you anticipated in your letter of 12 October. However, having discussed matters with the landscape officer whose comments you refer to in your letter, the Council considers that, although the establishment of a continuous 25m wide woodland belt along the west bank of the River Avon would no doubt in the longer term help to screen the new settlement edge, it is also considered important to maintain the open character of the riverside areas of country park punctuated with characteristic riparian riverside trees (native Willows), individual trees and, in small random groups along the west bank of the river. Opportunities to retain some visual connections between the built development areas and the proposed country park would also be preferable in order to provide an element of passive surveillance to public open space from adjoining residential areas. Aligning the policy to paragraph 5.12 would achieve this. It would also support structured tree planting to help break up views of new development in a more sensitive way.

Proposed Main Modification 118, therefore, amends bullet 5 of Policy CH2 to link to paragraph 5.12 and extends requirement 4 to highlight the need to screen and filter views of the new development and to avoid harmful visual impacts by development on exposed valley slopes, which the Council considers strengthens the Policy, to ensure a satisfactory form of development.

I trust this addresses satisfactorily the points raised in your letter.

Please let us know whether there are any further outstanding matters that need to be addressed.

Yours sincerely,



Alistair Cunningham
Director, Economic Development and Planning

Direct line: 01225 713203
Email: Alistair.cunningham@wiltshire.gov.uk