

Public webinar on 28 January 2021 Questions and answers

The council is receiving £75 million from government for a new road and will be making money from the uplifting value from its land along the route of the road - is this what is driving the project financial benefits to the council?

Firstly, the council has secured the government funding and has entered into a funding cost recovery strategy with Homes England who are managing that from the government's perspective. That includes use of council resources although over time the expectation is that overall, the scheme would not be a cost to the council.

Secondly, if development does come forward the funding will enable infrastructure to be forward funded so as to help more strategic planning and that is one of the main driving aspects of this project.

Lastly, the council will be making best use of its land and assets as part of this process and it is required to make best use of its land and assets. If in so doing we achieve value from those assets, that value released will be used to support delivery of services to communities.

Why is the council spending money on more road infrastructure rather than spending money on public transport?

The council secured the funding to ensure that if development comes forward there is infrastructure in place. The government funding is required to support development and bring forward housing plans in strategic ways, so the council doesn't have discretion on what it spends that money on.

This consultation is focused on the potential road route options and the council's wider approach to investment for example public transport is a different matter and would have to be considered in the light of the council's responsibilities and budget requirements and available resources.

Please can you confirm how many junctions and or roundabouts and or traffic lights will be included on the distributor road to facilitate access to or from the additional homes to be delivered?

We have identified junctions with the existing transport network which includes the A350 or the B4528 Pewsham Way and the A4. There will obviously be other junctions with other bits of existing network and indeed junctions with emerging adjacent developments, but these will be considered as part of the relevant planning applications.

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The distributor road would provide a high quality road link connecting the north east and southern parts of the town to the A350 and improvements to junction 17 of the M4 yet the detailed information does not seem to explain how the road connects to the A350 to Rawlings Farm in zone five?

The webinar presentation explains which sections of the eastern distributor road are being led by other developers and which sections are actually the Future Chippenham project. Broadly speaking if you think of Chippenham as a clock face from 12 o'clock due north through to around about two o'clock that element of the distributor road is other developer-led; many aspects of that are obviously on the ground at the moment. Coming forward the residual part from two o'clock down to six o'clock is the focus of this particular scheme.

You have given us 3 options to consider. Is the 4th option (no new road) still possible, or does a road have to be built under one of these 3 options?

We need to make clear that the Local Plan Review will determine type and nature of development; we are consulting on options should that development come forward. Any proposals will have to be considered against the Local Plan and policies. Your views need to be made as part of that consultation and we would encourage you to do so.

Re Middle Route B, why is the junction with the A4 beyond Stanley Park a staggered junction rather than the roundabout in the other two options?

The reason for the staggered junction is associated with land ownership; the staggered arrangement requires one less landowner agreement. This will be refined as the road design and landowner negotiations progress.

Is the distributor road envisaged as a two-lane or four-lane road with limited access via roundabout and is there a difference between options?

The potential road is a two-way, single carriageway throughout. Access will be controlled by junctions and/or roundabouts and these will be designed in more detail at the next stage.

I am confused about why we are being asked to consider alternatives for the route of the proposed distributor road before the Local Plan has been approved, which I understand may not be until 2023. The Local Plan will set the number of new houses to be built in Chippenham. This may be the 7,500 upon which the plan for the distributor road was predicated in the HIF bid. But what if the final figure in the Local Plan is fewer than 7,500, and possibly considerably fewer – say 4,500?

The Housing Infrastructure Fund bid identified up to 7,500 homes by 2046 which is over two Local Plan periods. In answer to your question, if the number in this plan was say 4,500 as

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you suggest, that would be supported by the Future Chippenham's housing delivery forecast.

When do you expect work to start on making the distributor road? Will it, or can it, begin before the Local Plan is approved?

The potential distributor road will be built when planning permission is gained for its construction. The earliest the project team have estimated the road construction could start is Autumn/Winter 2022/23.

Please could you state why your consultation document has no option to reject all or even parts of proposed route? This document is so pointed to receiving positive comments in itself, it is not fit for purpose.

The consultation form does enable people to object to the road. Question 5 seeks your views on what you consider are the important issues relating to the proposed distributor road route options. Question 6 has a free text box to allow you to go into more details. So, you can answer questions 5 stating your objection in the 'other' box and in question 6 set out fully your objection and reasons if you wish. You can also choose whether you wish to complete the road route options part of the form before submitting your response.

Alternatively you can object in principle by either emailing futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk or sending a written response to the Future Chippenham team, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN.

We would encourage you to use any of the above means to submit your feedback to us.

Why have you proposed a Southern link road between the A4 and A350 South when there is no reason whatsoever to spoil the landscape, apart from Councils need to develop council owned farms?

The distributor road, between the A4 and A350 south, provides a number of benefits including:

- mitigating transport congestion from the town centre by providing an alternative route to access the A350 to the south of Chippenham, this would predominately be used by residential areas to the south of Chippenham and also from traffic using the A4
- providing a transport network for land development to the south of Chippenham

Why has Wiltshire Council added 5,000 to the housing need figure for the county other than to support this project?

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The Future Chippenham programme has identified that up to 7,500 homes could be delivered on the sites that are supported by the distributor road up to 2046+.

When will Wiltshire Council be open and upfront about the Stone Circle Businesses it has set up to act as land agents and developers, also that they have already been funded with £5 million from Wiltshire Council and that the council state in their HIF bid documents that they are to borrow another £100 million for Stone Circle Businesses to progress this scheme?

The council will employ the model that provides the best oversight, minimum risk and return for its assets as it is required to do. There are no plans at this stage for the Stone Circle companies' involvement despite the inclusion in the bid document. The council would have to consider any proposed business plan from the Stone Circle company in terms of development and this currently takes place on an annual basis for one year in advance.

I am concerned that still no traffic impact assessment has been done for Calne and the villages near the proposed development. 7,500 homes = potentially c15,000 additional cars + many extra delivery vehicles using the local roads. If eg a roundabout is going to be needed at Lower Derry Hill, or a footbridge crossing the A4 linking Derry Hill with Studley, these should be being planned for simultaneously, not as an afterthought to 'mitigate' what could well be a predictable increase in the volume of traffic at these points. In Calne both the junction of the A4 and Curzon St, and the junction of the A4 and Silver Street (A3102) are AQMAs – the latter recording the second highest level of nitrogen dioxide in Wiltshire. Residents are rightly worried at the prospect of any more traffic passing through these points during busy times.

If I wanted to build an extension to my house, my next door neighbours quite rightly would be concerned at how it might affect them. Will they be overlooked, will it put their garden into shade, what about its bulk and design for example. It seems to me that the proposals for expanding Chippenham are being promoted by Wiltshire Council without regard to whatever impact these might have on the villages to the east and south of the town and to Calne. This has to be addressed.

The model used is the Wiltshire Strategic Area model and this has been cordoned to initially assess the impact on the main routes through the town centre. The model will assess the impact on the wider transport network and appropriate mitigation will be included as part of the planning application; unclassified roads will also be considered where affected.

Can the redevelopment of the Bridge Centre area be a condition of this road proposal? One of the major benefits of an east-west alternative transit, is surely to simplify and improve this area. If these plans are approved, can it be conditional on fixing the Bridge Centre area and preventing the A4 from passing through the town, as we have already done with the A350.

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In response to the questions you raised regarding the Bridge Centre and the no road option, these questions are best placed to be answered by the council's Spatial Planning team. We have therefore forwarded a copy of your email to them.

The documents I have read make no reference to the fact that the proposed road crosses several County Farms. These farms are active dairy producers and it is not just 'empty land' although at any one time due to cattle being moved around the pastures may give the impression of being unused to non-farmers. The acreage of County Farms across England has dramatically fallen from 426,695 acres in 1977 to just 215,155 acres in 2017. Thus, the proposed road further reduced farming land available for rent.

An assessment of the impact of the loss of agricultural soils and the impact on farming businesses is made in the Preliminary Environmental Options Assessment Report (PEAOR) in the Soils and Geology and Population and Health chapters respectively.

Agricultural land classification (ALC) surveys undertaken previously covered land west of the River Avon in the south and north of Stanley Lane in the north and this was used to inform this assessment. This survey information found a close correlation between surface geology, soil series and ALC grade which then allowed us to make an informed judgement of what soil types are likely to be present on site. The combination of the existing survey information, and the estimated soil types found that 'Best and Most Versatile Soils' (BMV) which include grades 1, 2a, 2b and 3a are largely focused in the western and northern extent of the scheme area, with pockets of grade 3a soils scattered across zones 2 and 3.

The key findings of the assessment are that Option A generally affected less 'BMV Soils', but this is largely due to avoiding the grade 1 and 2 soils east and north-east of Lackham roundabout. When a preferred route option is selected, an ALC survey of the route will be undertaken to ensure the loss of agricultural soils is fully reported within the Environment Statement for the project.

What provision is made for the replacement of these County Farms in the Council's proposals?

The County Farms portfolio is managed in accordance with a list of well established objectives and on the basis that part is to be retained and part disposed over time with properties categorised according to their capital, revenue and development potential. This is set out within the Rural Estate Asset Management Framework V1.5 which was approved by the Council in August 2019. There are no specific proposal to replace the County Farms at Chippenham, should they be taken out of agricultural use, but the Council is committed to the effective management of the remainder of the portfolio and is working with tenants to facilitate opportunities to remain in occupation of undeveloped land on a flexible basis and to re-locate to alternative holdings where possible.

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Chippenham used to be proud to be called a "Market Town" and all its connections, you only have to take a look at all the statues of cattle etc placed around the town. Now with the proposed new houses and roads etc, what will it turn into - a new town having lost its identity forever, so sad especially when there isn't the employment to uphold these new builds, Chippenham will be what? Bath, Swindon and Bristol have far better infrastructure to withhold if and when future development is required after COVID.

A Masterplan for Future Chippenham is currently being prepared. This includes detailed consideration of what the vision for the future of Chippenham is as well as ensuring that all the necessary social, and green and blue infrastructure is provided.

Given that this road is dependent on the approval of development sites in the Local Plan, how do you expect the meet the deadline for using the £75 million funds from the government, whilst the Local Plan is still under consultation and not due to be decided and accepted for a couple of years?

The HIF grant of £75 million is available to support the work required to plan and deliver the proposed distributor road, subject to planning permission being achieved.

Of the three options proposed, only option A presents a true bypass to take traffic away from the town. Options B and C are combined distributor and bypass - leading to high volume traffic through residential areas. Whilst option A has been stated as not favoured, it appears the strategic objectives of option A are entirely different from B and C and so they can't be compared. Option A makes sense. B and C do not. Please comment.

Transport modelling for all three options forecasts reduction of commuting traffic travelling through Chippenham.

The distributor road provides alternative routes for traffic to access the A350, the inner route option C performs better than option B and A. Further information is available in chapter 10.8 of the Options Assessment Report which is available on www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation

The function of the proposed road to the east of Chippenham is for local transport connectivity and distribution, to enable residential and employment development, it is not a strategic road or bypass. The strategic objectives of the scheme are appropriate.

The A350 to the west of Chippenham will remain the primary strategic transport route and is in fact a bypass.

The outer purple route would involve two additional bridges over the canal . . . so that isn't an option, is it?

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Option A does include two bridges over the Wilts & Berks Canal, one in assessment zone 2, near Pewsham Locks and one in assessment zone 3, near Green Lane Farm. At both of these locations the historic canal feature is still present.

It is an option but does have clear disbenefits in terms of costs and impact on the historic canal.

Option B and C both include one canal bridge in assessment zone 2. Crossing the historic alignment of the canal and Avon Valley walk near Forest Farm, the canal feature is no longer present at this location. However, the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust is looking to extend the redevelopment of Pewsham Locks and restore the canal. Our development team are in discussions with Wilts and Berks Canal Trust and a coordinated approach with other landowners could enable and expedite the restoration of the canal.

We are asking for feedback on all road route options that are part of this consultation.

You say questions not answered will be answered after but when? I have been told for the housing one last week it will be weeks as they have so many consultations going on which will limit the time between answers and deadline?

The project team aim to respond to questions raised within 10 working days where possible.

Where are the consultation documents with the public for the HIF bid?

There is no requirement for Wiltshire Council to consult on its bid application process. Information on the consultation process for the distributor road route options and how to get involved, including all consultation documentation can be found at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation

Is the purpose of route Option A to make Option B and Option C look less bad?

All options presented for public consultation meet the strategic objectives of the scheme, for instance to mitigate traffic congestion in the town centre to enable development growth.

All options are routed through the area allocated for development in the Local Plan for 2036, currently being consulted on, although Option A does indeed follow the outer perimeter of this area.

A range of options is necessary to compare each assessment case. The options provide alternative routes through a range of different landowners. Discussions with landowners continue in parallel with the public consultation and both of these will be considered for the update to the delivery case which will be presented as part of the options assessment update in summer 2021.

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We can see already we have a good chance of success with a legal challenge like Oxford, this isn't included in your timeline?

In developing the timeline to support the programme delivery, a number of potential contingencies have been accounted for.

As the road crosses the busy A4 in Option B, why have you chosen a staggered junction?

The reason for the staggered junction is associated with land ownership; the staggered arrangement requires one less landowner agreement. This will be refined as the road design and landowner negotiations progress.

Who is funding the delivery of the Rawlings Green part of the road? Is it the Rawlings Green developer or is it the HIF money?

The HIF bid included funding for the road required to connect to the railway bridge funded through the Rawlings Green development.

Why was the Sadlers Mead car park built on the wrong side of the station adding to congestion and the traffic lights installed at Hathaway Retail park added causing further issues when not needed apart from for pedestrians, is this so you could say there was congestion and push the plans through?

This is not part of this project.

What is the timescale for the construction of the housing developments shown?

Any housing delivery will be contingent on the planning process. However, it is envisaged that housing could be delivered over 20+ years.

40 minute presentation of what we already know and 20 minutes of questions when you know you have so many questions is not ethical?

The Future Chippenham team has added an additional webinar that will provide more opportunities for questions to be raised and answered.

Will the road be dual carriageway at any stage?

The potential road is a two-way, single carriageway throughout.

Option 2 Forest Lane Link road option you said is no longer being considered is this correct?

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This is correct. The two Pewsham Link options being considered as part of this consultation are Pewsham link options 1 and 3. Land discussions are ongoing and are running parallel to the public consultation, these are likely to require some relatively minor changes to route alignments and would not have a significant impact on the options assessment.

I would like to see exactly where option C starts, this presentation shows a different location to the YouTube video entitled 'Consultation of the Future Chippenham road route options.

The options assessment plans available for public consultation are located on the consultation web page

[https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/5746/Future-Chippenham-Distributor-Road-Options-Assessment-Plans/pdf/Future Chippenham Distributor Road Options Assessment Plans.pdf?m=637466574344500000](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/5746/Future-Chippenham-Distributor-Road-Options-Assessment-Plans/pdf/Future%20Chippenham%20Distributor%20Road%20Options%20Assessment%20Plans.pdf?m=637466574344500000)

How big is the area to be developed compared with the current built area of Chippenham? By our map it looks like almost a doubling.

The potential road could unlock land for potential development of approximately 1600 acres.

For the 3 options, will there be different speed limits associated with each option? For instance the outer route will have a higher speed limit due to not being routed through a potential residential area?

The speed of the road will be defined as part of the ultimate highway development. It is envisaged it will be low speed.

A desk study of the environment does not fit in with climate change targets? I can supply thousands of photos of all the wildlife you will destroy.

Whilst the overall environmental assessment undertaken at this options appraisal stage was largely based off desk-study information, certain topic areas such as landscape and biodiversity did include the use of site survey information. When a preferred option has been selected and the scheme progresses towards a planning application, a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be undertaken and reported within an Environmental Statement. This assessment will be based off detailed site surveys and a more in-depth study of environmental impacts than the proportional assessment undertaken at this stage, although the assessment in the Preliminary Environmental Assessment Options Report (PEAOR) can be considered the initial step of this EIA process.

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The biodiversity chapter of the PEAOR which informed the Options Appraisal Process was informed by an extended Phase 1 habitat survey undertaken across the site to record habitats present and evidence of the presence of, and the potential of each habitat to support, protected and priority species. This was further supported by wintering bird surveys and preliminary bat roost assessments undertaken across this area in winter 2019/2020. The assessment carried out in the PEAOR used this data, alongside Environment Record data and the locations of priority habitats and designated sites to form an assessment of the impact of each of the road options in each zone.

The extended Phase 1 habitat survey has also informed the likely protected species on site and set the scope for further species specific surveys that are currently ongoing. These surveys are being undertaken in alignment with current survey guidance and will tell us what protected species are likely absent or present on the site, how species present are using the site and therefore what the potential impact of the scheme would be on these species. From this point, mitigation will then be designed in-line with the mitigation hierarchy and current guidance to ensure the development does not lead to significant adverse impacts.

Given the Grade 2 listed property at Rowden Manor was given as part of the reason for eliminating option D why is the same not true for Option C which starts with a western roundabout just 200 metres from the three Grade 2 listed buildings at Showell Farm?

The key reasons for eliminating Option D was a combination of factors based on both ecological and cultural heritage impacts. The heritage concerns for which Option D was discounted were that the route was aligned through the Rowden Park Conservation Area within a visually prominent location and in close proximity to the Scheduled Monument south-east of Rowden Farm. This would alter the setting of both the conservation area and potentially the Scheduled Monument. These potential impacts on cultural heritage receptors was also combined with the potential impact on the local wildlife site at Mortimore's Wood. Whilst the option avoided travelling through the designated wildlife site, it ran through an area of new planting put in place to extend the site. Because of the potential impacts on these biodiversity and heritage assets, Option D was discounted at the first options sift.

Option C was maintained as an option through to the second sift and more detailed environmental assessment despite some potential setting impacts on the Grade II Listed Buildings at Showell Farm identified at the Sift 1 stage, as these were deemed less likely to be significant in comparison to the Cultural Heritage impacts on the Rowden Park Conservation Area and the Scheduled Monument at Rowden Manor, associated with Option D above. Option C was however scored less favourably in Zone 1 in the cultural heritage assessment in the Preliminary Environmental Assessment Options Report (PEAOR) compared to Option B, in part due to its greater proximity to the Rowden Park conservation area and the listed buildings at Showell farm.

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There is a good deal of talk about carbon cost for example, but what about offset? What is being planned regarding tree-planting for example, on a large scale, to make up for all this concrete?

The emerging vision for Future Chippenham will seek to include the delivery of an environmentally sustainable development that minimises carbon emissions and provides net environmental and biodiversity gain.

Why are you proposing to submit a planning application before the Chippenham Local Plan, which will approve strategic housing sites and housing numbers, has been agreed?

Details of the preferred route will be shared during a public consultation in summer 2021 alongside a Masterplan for Future Chippenham which will set the overall context.

How many people are on this webinar?

94 people attended this webinar.

Is the purpose of route Option A to make Option B and Option C look less bad?

All road route options presented provide the opportunity to support up to 7,500 homes across the sites and we would welcome your feedback on these.

Please can you publish the terms of the £75 million grant - either the Grant Agreement (redacted for commercially sensitive sections) or a summary of the terms such as Essex Council did recently for their HIF grant. And in the meantime, what are the commitments on timescale for building the road and what are the commitments on housing numbers and timescale?

The Grant Determination Agreement is a commercially sensitive document and on the clear advice from Homes England will not be published at this stage.

The high-level timeline for the programme identifies that the road will be completed by early 2026. Housing delivery will be subject to planning process but is estimated to be delivered in a phased approach over 20+ years.

Will the road be future proofed by including the potential to be dualled in the future?

The function of the proposed low speed road to the east of Chippenham is for local transport connectivity and distribution, to enable residential and employment development, it is not a strategic road or bypass.

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If the roads are dual carriageway throughout, how do you envisage people walking into the countryside? I'm asking from someone who lives in Cepen Park south who risks life and limb at Chequers roundabout to walk to Corsham.

The potential road is a two-way, single carriageway throughout and cycle and pedestrian paths will be included with the delivery of the road. Cycle and pedestrian networks will be influenced by the adjacent land development and associated transport assessments.

Option C seems to have a lot to recommend it (compared to the others), but why not start it at the Lackham college roundabout?

Option C starts on the B4528 to provide an option to support landowner discussions.

It is possible that following landowner discussions option C could connect at Lackham roundabout before crossing the River Avon between the Sewage Treatment Works and Lower Lodge Farm, effectively a combination of route options B and C.

Following public and stakeholder consultation, transport modelling and land discussions this will be progressed in further detail to inform the requirements for junction types/positions and layouts.

Will the road be provided with a separate dedicated cycle path?

Cycle and pedestrian paths will be included with the delivery of the road. Cycle and pedestrian networks will be influenced by the adjacent land development and associated transport assessments.

What arrangements will be made for footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes where the new road crosses them?

Crossings will be provided where any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are bisected. Details of these crossing will be determined following the preferred options election.

A full detailed review of PRoW will be undertaken following selection of the preferred road option. This will be coordinated with adjacent land development.

PRoW will be improved where appropriate as part of the development planning applications.

Where the new road bisects an existing PRoW, traffic flows for both the road and PRoW will be assessed and an appropriate diversion or crossing included in the road planning application.

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It is likely that either informal or formal (controlled for example traffic signals or zebra) will be appropriate to provide safe crossings of the road; as mentioned above the form and type of these crossings is informed by the transport assessments for the planning applications.

Why is there no reference to the fact that outline planning permission has already been granted for a new link road and roundabout from the A350 to the B4528 across land at Showell Farm with access into the approved Rowden Park development?

This is not part of this scheme.

Across zones can the option be switched or is it just option A, B or C across all zones decision?

Yes. The road route options have been split into zones to allow for feedback for the preferred route within each zone. This could result in a preferred route that is combination of the different routes.

How will the proposed routes cross the national cycle way? Will this be bridging or will people have to cross the road?

All 3 options propose crossings at grade with the National Cycleway, meaning a crossing of the road will be included here to facilitate this. The type of crossing implemented will be informed by the transport assessment and forecast flows for traffic permitted to use the road and traffic permitted to use the national cycleway (cyclists, pedestrians, horses).

What is the point of any link road between the A4 and the A350 south?

The distributor road, between the A4 and A350 south, provides a number of benefits including:

- mitigating transport congestion from the town centre by providing an alternative route to access the A350 to the south of Chippenham, this would predominately be used by residential areas to the south of Chippenham and also from traffic using the A4
- providing a transport network for land development to the south of Chippenham

Zone 1 has been stated as having a preference for option C on basis of carbon footprint and cost grounds, though is clearly discounting recognised archaeological and historic setting of Showell Farm. Surely all efforts should be focused on reduction of historical impact for future generations. Despite the aspiration for walking distances for instance what is the rationale to introduce a new roundabout rather than connecting option C to the existing Lackham roundabout as for the other options with benefit of minimising impact to archaeology and historical settings?

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As outlined in the presentation, across the environmental assessment, Option B was seen as slightly 'best fit' than Option C. This was in part due to the reduced impact upon the historical setting of Showell Farm and also the lower alignment of Option B in the existing landscape than Options A or C allowing it to be better shielded from view.

However, the assessment scoring criteria in the Options Assessment Report (OAR) considers not just all environment topics, but also connectivity and cost. In this respect, Option C was a significantly lowest cost and provided greater connectivity benefits, whilst also providing some environmental benefits over Option B and A such as a reduced amount of greenhouse gas emissions during construction and operation. This meant that at this stage it is identified as the 'best fit' route through Zone 1. However, as noted in the consultation documents and the presentation, the options appraisal process is not complete. Following the consultation, the OAR will be updated to consider:

- consultation feedback
- deliverability through the engagement of a construction contractor
- information being received from ongoing environmental site surveys
- progression of landowner agreements and
- cost estimates updates

The incorporation of the above may lead to a change in the 'best fit' alignment outlined at this stage, which may lead to a different option being 'best fit' in that zone, or alternatively an amalgamation of two options to seek the benefits and avoid the dis-benefits of both.

Why is Option A on here at all? You have dismissed it in every zone by every measure

All options presented for public consultation meet the strategic objectives of the scheme, for instance to mitigate traffic congestion in the town centre to enable development growth.

All options are routed through the area allocated for development in the Local Plan for 2036, currently being consulted on, although Option A does indeed follow the outer perimeter of this area.

A range of options is necessary to compare each assessment case. The options provide alternative routes through a range of different landowners. Discussions with landowners continue in parallel with the public consultation and both of these will be considered for the update to the delivery case which will be presented as part of the options assessment update in the summer of 2021.

There was no mention about the visual impact from the Monkton Park area for Options A and B?

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In zone 3, Option A is aligned higher in the landscape than Options B and C. This is because Option A is routed largely behind existing landform south of Hither Farm and is also located further away from Monkton Park making it less visible from this location, although it remains prominent in views from the East and South. Option B lies slightly higher in the landscape than Option C so is more visible from Monkton Park, but the distance of view would mean the route is not a dominant feature in the landscape, whilst Option C follows slightly lower ground. Both are well naturally screened from views to the south and east.

Mitigation including planting, localised earthworks and strengthening of existing field margins has been considered to understand the likely residual visual effects of each option. Option A's prominent location in the landscape makes it harder to mitigate in this regard, although views from Monkton Park are aided by the distance. Option B is similarly aided by its offset distance from Monkton Park, and with careful planting improvements of existing field margins and localised earthworks, would not have a significant impact on views from this location. Option C is the closest option to Monkton Park but follows a lower alignment. This makes the use of localised mounding and screening vegetation as mitigation easier to implement without affecting local landscape character. With likely mitigation to be implemented, Option C is not likely to have significant effects on views from Monkton Park.

Why cannot elements of the Options be combined to produce a less impactful development? For example, Option A being combined with Option B in Zone 2 and Option B combining into C further eastward in Zone 2.

Elements of each option within each zone can be combined to provide the most appropriate option, an example of this is presented with the current 'best fit' option for zone 3, where the first part of this route between the A4 and Stanley Lane follows the alignment of Option B and the second part of the route from Stanley Lane to the National Cycle Network 403 follows the alignment of Option C. This example mitigates specific environmental impact on Stanley Park and habitats for Great Crested Newts.

Please provide reasons for combining routes within specific zones for further review. Details for providing this information are provided on the Future Chippenham consultation webpage www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham via the online survey or email.

What can we do to stop all the options?

By filling out our consultation form which can be found on our webpage www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham. The consultation form has a free text box in question 6 that can be utilised for this. Feedback can also be emailed to futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk or posted to the Future Chippenham team, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN.

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Do your environmental impact assessments on route options include the requirement to build housing and amenities? You're discussing saving a hedge when whole fields will be turned into housing.

At this early route optioneering stage, the preliminary environmental assessment of options did not consider the development of housing and amenities around the options. The concept framework used to inform the strategic assessment of the options outlined that housing would be in similar locations regardless of the location of the new road development. With this in mind, at this early optioneering stage, the preliminary environmental assessment of options considered the road independently of the housing.

Whilst the housing that comes forward will lead to the removal of some of the fields themselves as habitat, the field are generally species poor due to their use for agriculture. The hedgerows and boundary features of the fields are however, more likely to provide opportunities for biodiversity than the fields themselves as they provide a network of green corridors throughout the landscape which can be used by a variety of species for sheltering, foraging and/or commuting. Some of these hedgerows could also potentially screen any development in these fields. As this is the case, the development of the housing will likely come forward by maintaining and strengthening many of these boundary features to provide green corridors maintaining connectivity, allowing species to navigate the landscape whilst having the dual purpose of providing visual screening of the development.

Doesn't your preferred route use part of the A4 to avoid Stanley Lane? Won't this create a bottleneck?

The current 'best fit' option does indeed use a section of the A4 to connect the distributor road from assessment zone 2 to assessment zone 3. The transport assessment for the road and development planning applications will review this and provide greater detail on new junction types and any mitigation required to sections of existing transport network and existing junctions. The distance between the two junctions is circa 400m, at this optioneering stage we are confident that any mitigation along this section of the A4 is viable.

When will you start listening to residents?

The Future Chippenham project team is seeking your feedback on the road route options and confirm that all feedback received will be considered when identifying the preferred route.

I missed some of the presentation, has it been recorded so I can see it?

A recording of the presentation can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hLLK8AGuHo

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On the penultimate page by using the A4 you create two crossings rather than just one. Will this not significantly interfere with traffic flow and safety on the A4?

The current 'best fit' option does indeed use a section of the A4 to connect the distributor road from assessment zone 2 to assessment zone 3. The transport assessment for the road and development planning applications will review this and provide greater detail on new junction types and any mitigation required to sections of existing transport network and existing junctions. The distance between the two junctions is circa 400m, at this optioneering stage we are confident that any mitigation along this section of the A4 is viable.

Will the road be built before any housing development begins?

Yes, but planning permission could be gained for housing prior to the completion of the road.

Has coalescence between Chippenham and Studley/Derry Hill been considered? The development and the solar farm will result in the complete loss of open space on the A4 and sees the town coalesce with the settlements to the East.

The emerging Masterplan takes into detailed consideration the landscape character of the area and identifies where important views will need to be maintained or mitigated, for example, through woodland planting.

Which body is responsible for reviewing the planning application?

Wiltshire Local Planning Authority.

Travelling south down the A350, onto this road doesn't it make much more sense to have an almost straight on option rather than making part of the B road at Showell Farm part of the new road?

Option C starts on the B4528 to provide an option to support landowner discussions, this option affects one landowner. Option A affects one landowner. Option B affects two landowners. Following public and stakeholder consultation, transport modelling and land discussions this will be progressed in further detail to inform the requirements for junction types/positions and layouts.

In the 'masterplan', what is the vision for Chippenham's employment proposition (for example leisure, distribution, retail and others) - this affects employment density and commuting?

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Work on the Masterplan is currently ongoing and will be subject to public consultation in the summer 2021.

Why didn't my question appear?

Questions raised are published when they are answered in the webinar itself. All remaining questions are published later with answers.

Past Chippenham developments have roughly been based on access to the railway station that was historically located to serve the Cattle Market and Westinghouse both of which are no more. Has Wiltshire Council considered that present and future development should be located adjacent to the A350 and a replacement station built to remove the need for transit through the town centre? A new school could be located behind B&Q to serve all the housing in that area. The proposed road(s) would not be required.

This consultation relates to specific distributor road route options. Comments in relation to the location of future developments at Chippenham can be made to the separate consultation being undertaken on the Local Plan Review which closes on 9 March 2021.

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation

It is hoped that the canal will be restored from Pewsham Top Lock, north to the A4, so why is the old canal route there marked as new woodland?

The road options assessment does not include new woodland as part of this consultation. Requirements for planting will be reviewed in more detail prior to the planning application.

If you are referring to the Local Plan Review, Planning for Chippenham, Figure 6, Concept Plan, then please email this question to the Local Plan consultation at spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk

Traffic modelling will have taken place using pre-COVID data and assertions. COVID will change future travel needs – my company employs 300 people in west Chippenham and has already stated a long term post-COVID work from home policy leading to reduced travel. How has this been factored into the modelling that has led to the justification for the proposed roads?

Traffic modelling reflects base traffic levels pre-COVID and future growth without COVID restrictions (for instance no reduced traffic levels to reflect travel behaviour during COVID) which provides a robust assessment and is in line with modelling guidelines/practices. Furthermore, the potential change in traffic behaviour post-COVID is unknown. However, there will still be a need for many businesses or educational institutions to operate as they did pre-COVID for instance employees, customers, students, visitors travelling to or from a

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place or work, education or as part of it. Similarly, delivery vehicles, industry vehicles, trades vehicles for example are all likely to continue to exhibit travel behaviours as per pre-COVID.

Why doesn't Option B exactly follow the high voltage cable route rather than deviating south of Lower Lodge Farm?

Option B follows along lower slopes of topography south of Lower Lodge Farm and also south of Middle Lodge Farm and provides an alternative route to option C for landowner discussions.

It should be noted that Option B in assessment zone 1 could be linked to option C in assessment zone 2, if these are the preferred routes in each zone following public and stakeholder consultation.

Continuing along the alignment of the high voltage overhead cable route is not desirable for a number of reasons. Woodland east of Kings roundabout would be affected, all options avoid direct conflict with this woodland. This woodland also contains the historic route of the Wilts and Berks Canal. The location of the bridge for route options B and C consider the historic alignment of the canal and there are ongoing discussions with landowners and the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust to consider future restoration.

7,500 houses and 1 million square feet of employment land at benchmark employment densities implies a significant amount of out-commuting. Has the transport modelling assessed the impact of A4 East – and is that report on the consultation site – can't see it?

Please refer to section 10.8 of the Options Assessment Report for further information on the modelling of the route options.

The strategic model for Wiltshire is built with numerous data sources, including Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) data. This ANPR data, in conjunction with other data sources such as Census 2011, is used to derive the distribution of traffic flows on the network. As such a level of out-commuting by car is reflected in the base model in line with existing commuting patterns. Analysis of the Census 2011 Data, presented in the Chippenham Transport Strategy 2016, indicates that "64% of people travelling to work from Chippenham out-commute, while the remaining 36% of people live and work in the town."

It would be expected that out-commuting levels would be lower for the Future Chippenham site with a range of additional employment opportunities provided within the town and the development site. The distribution in the strategic model assumes a level of internalisation of trips within the development and the town. The assumption applied in the model is that 54% of trips generated from the site would stay within Chippenham. This is on the

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assumption that a significant employment would be provided on the Future Chippenham site. It is assumed that the remaining 46% would travel beyond the town, but it should be noted that not all of these would be journeys on the M4 (as such using M4 J17).

Further detail will be provided within the Transport Assessment which will be prepared in line with appropriate local and national guidelines and submitted through the development planning application process.

Much of this discussion is concentrating on the negative aspects reference visibility and cost. What has been done to consider the Opportunities to carry out landscaping and improvements to the greater Chippenham area? Strengths – Weaknesses – Opportunities – Threats assessments are not just about Weaknesses and Threats.

As outlined in the presentation, the potential for visual screening and planting is embedded within the concept design of the highway shown within the cross-section drawings. Whilst planting and landscaping will be part of the design of the highway, this needs to be in-keeping with the existing landscape character of the site. Initial reviews of the use of landscaping mounds as well as planting was factored into the assessment of both cost and visibility, but regardless of these activities, Option A remains more visible in all zones by nature of its location in the existing landscape.

When a preferred option has been selected and design progresses, the landscaping design will also be progressed in a collaborative manner with all teams to enable the design to provide both visual screening and biodiversity and drainage benefits.

How would the road be built across the old railway track to mitigate the environmental impact?

If you mean the Great Western Rail line then this is being delivered by the Rawlings Green developers.

If you are referring to the National Cycle Network Route 403 (former rail line) then the following information is relevant:

Locations for these at grade crossings seek to minimise impact on existing trees and vegetation whilst also minimising visual impact of the works.

Ecology surveys are currently progressing to confirm species types, populations, locations and movement corridors; ecological mitigation measures will be included in the Environmental Impact Assessment for the planning application but could include fencing, hedgerow strengthening, wildlife tunnels and bat bridges.

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Strikes me that this comes down to a simple comparison between Cost of Construction versus Cost of Environmental Impact. How do you Cost/Quantify the Monetary (£s) Value/Cost of Environmental Impact?

Benefit cost ratios for route options are provided in section 10.8.6 of the Options Assessment Report (OAR). For the purposes of this OAR Level 1 and 2 impacts have been considered as this is most appropriate for the consideration of the differences between the options. The Level 1 and 2 impacts assessed are:

- Level 1 - User impacts (travel times), Vehicle Operating Costs (VOC), Indirect tax, Greenhouse gas (CO2)
- Level 2 - Increased economic output in imperfect competitive market

The cost of construction is assessed as part of the financial case, with route options ranked in order of preference / lowest delivery cost.

Environmental impact is assessed as part of the environmental case with route options ranked in order of preference / lowest environmental impact.

There are clear differences between the options in terms of costs. Clear differences between the options are presented in the OAR and OAR summary and also in the public consultation webinars.

The Preliminary Environmental Options Assessment Report provides details of each option's potential impact on the environment, prior to environmental mitigation. The route alignments seek to avoid conflict with any obvious rich ecological habitats and cross agricultural open landscape. Generally, the main differences are associated with the length and scale of infrastructure (road and bridges) and landscape and visual impact.

We have not provided a cost of environmental impact vs cost of construction, this would not provide any added benefit to the assessment process / further influence selection of the preferred route.

The process for ranking each option will provide an option that aligns best with the assessment criteria.

The assessment process not only considers scheme costs and environmental impact it also considers alignment with strategic scheme objectives and deliverability. Updates to the Options Assessment will be undertaken following public consultation and landowner / developer discussions.

How would the road be built over the old railway track to mitigate the environmental and visual/noise impact, and ensure user safety when connecting to it?

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All three options propose crossings at grade with the National Cycleway, meaning a crossing of the road will be included here to facilitate this.

The type of crossing implemented will be informed by the transport assessment which will include forecast flows for traffic permitted to use the road and traffic permitted to use the national cycleway (cyclists, pedestrians, horses).

Locations for these at grade crossings seek to minimise impact on existing trees and vegetation, crossing at grade reduces visual impact.

Ecology surveys are currently progressing to confirm species types, locations and movement corridors; ecological mitigation measures will be included in the Environmental Impact Assessment for the planning application but could include fencing, wildlife tunnels and bat bridges.

In terms of safety, a full independent road safety audit will be undertaken on proposals for the scheme.

Isn't it the case Chippenham will be the largest town in the entire county and as such desperately needs a complete ring road?

The options assessment process identified the need for a distributor road and not a ring road.

What is modelled traffic impact at J17 in terms of delays, and also on A4 East?

Please refer to section 10.8.4 of the Options Assessment Report (OAR). Further detail on specific traffic impacts at these junctions/locations will be provided within the Transport Assessment which will be prepared in line with appropriate local and national guidelines and submitted through the development planning application process.

Where does the economic benefit to Chippenham come from?

The economic benefits come from a number of different areas which are unfortunately too long to detail here. However, these are detailed in our HIF bid which can be found on the Future Chippenham webpage https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/5439/HIF-FF-000456-BC-01-Chippenham-Urben-Expansion-Final-submitted-business-case-redacted/pdf/HIF_FF_000456_BC_01_Chippenham_Urben_Expansion_Final_submitted_Business_Case_Redacted.pdf?m=637442430691700000

It's impossible to judge a preferred route without understanding the overall development ideas. What have you done to identify development sites?

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The Local Plan consultation currently underway identifies preferred sites that the potential distributor road would support. In addition, to support the options assessment process, the Future Chippenham team has a draft concept framework which identifies what development of the sites it has identified could look like to inform the road route options.

How is traffic congestion for Chippenham improved if an additional 7,500 properties, employment sites and additional road use from the M4?

Please refer to section 10.8 of the Options Assessment Report (OAR) which recognises that wider transport network mitigation would be required to mitigate the impact of 7,500 homes and this would be considered in further detail in the work on the Transport Assessment to support a planning application.

https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/5745/Full-options-assessment-report/pdf/Future_Chippenham_-_Options_Assessment_Report_January_2021.pdf?m=637463272933430000

Atkins say roundabouts and traffic lights considered as part of planning application. What has been assumed in models – it will affect delays/traffic flow, carbon emissions?

Please refer to section 10.8.1 of the Options Assessment Report (OAR). The core model includes planned schemes identified by Wiltshire Council and identified within the Chippenham Transport Strategy. Further assessment of mitigation in addition to the core model would be considered as part of the Transport Assessment for the planning application.

How have you identified the housing need? Future Chippenham is aspirational and unproven.

This is a consideration for the Local Plan. The Future Chippenham programme has identified that up to 7,500 homes could be delivered on the sites that are supported by the distributor road up to 2046+.

5 March 2021