

## Public webinar on 11 February 2021 Questions and answers

**Wiltshire Council has declared that we are in a climate emergency. Why do the strategic objectives for this new road and development not acknowledge this as the top consideration?**

The council has set a very ambitious target of becoming a carbon neutral county by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality the council will, amongst other things, need to account for carbon in its development plans. The council also looks at ways of delivering new development with reduced carbon emissions and will investigate offsetting any residual carbon emissions so that net input into the atmosphere as close to zero carbon emissions as possible can be achieved. The carbon impact and environmental impact has been taken into account and is one of the key considerations as set out in the presentation. A programme such as Future Chippenham will need to demonstrate its commitment to policies in the Local Plan and how they will be met in any of the planning applications that it makes.

By having planned development, the council can also have a better opportunity to ensure development takes this into account and is a stronger way to ensure the target stays on track.

**Is the road going to be a dual carriageway?**

The proposed road will be low speed, two-way single lane carriageway.

**Why are all the options on the east side of Chippenham?**

If the question is alluding to why the road options are on the side of Chippenham, then the Future Chippenham development area lies in that vicinity and the road that we are consulting on is to serve those developments. It may be that actually the questioner is perhaps thinking more about the housing and perhaps this is something that would be better directed to the Local Plan consultation, if the thought is why is all the housing being depicted through this consultation on the east side.

**Can you advise of any comparable sized market towns which have been surrounded/locked in by a de-facto ring road?**

This question seems to be suggesting that we are trying to build a ring road and encapsulate Chippenham within a severance of all the way around, that is not what we are trying to do. The distributor road as part of Future Chippenham really is envisaged that it is going to be part of the development, it is going to be integral to the development. It is not

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going to be a border around the outside and that is not really what we are trying to achieve. This is about place making it is not about creating a ring road in the traditional concept of ring roads in other locations.

**What assessment has been made of the total increase in carbon emissions over, say, the next 10 years as a result of this new road—not just the embodied emissions of the road building but also the increased traffic and road use?**

At this stage no quantified assessment of operational carbon has been undertaken. An assessment comparing the options in respect to their potential carbon emissions was undertaken for the Preliminary Environmental Options Assessment Report (PEOAR). Using experience and understanding it is quite simple to make a comparison assessment at this stage. Undertaking a quantified assessment would require significant traffic modelling which we shouldn't have for each of the options, so we've undertaken a quantitative assessment essentially which found that the shorter option would be most efficient from a carbon perspective. As the scheme progresses towards the planning permission once we have selected a preferred route the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process will be required to provide a quantification of those carbon emissions as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

**What consideration has been made for the future impact of greater working from home, and therefore less rush hour congestion, on the requirement for this new road?**

The transport assessment for the road planning application will certainly consider forecasts for all modes of transport and the impact of COVID-19. We need to remember that the road is not just for motor vehicles it is a transport network enabling opportunities to travel by cyclists, pedestrians, buses and cars so the reforecasting will be reforecast of all modes of transport.

**Whichever route we end up with, will the route have pavements for safe pedestrian use, or will these be without pavements like Avenue La Fleche and Pewsham Way?**

The cross sections shared as part of this presentation include paved pedestrian and cycle routes. There will be further focus on and a review of the Public Rights of Way networks and an overall connectivity plan that will be developed as part of the masterplans for the adjacent developments. So yes, they will be paved but there will be a network of paved footways and cycleways as part of the overall masterplan.

The cross-sections clearly depict the longitudinal connection along the route itself but the importance of access to the countryside clearly is very high on the agenda at the moment. So as this scheme is being developed, we need to look out from the road into the wider country to ensure that we have got connectivity with the wider public rights of way going out

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of town and also very importantly the masterplan needs to be thinking about connections into the town. The whole question of footways and cycleways needs to be looked at holistically not just along the route itself but as part of the wider scheme.

## **What's happening to the tenanted farmers currently working the land?**

Meetings have taken place so all tenant farmers have been made aware of the impact these potential road options would have on their tenancies. We will continue to liaise with them about their options as the scheme progresses.

## **Aren't these proposals simply 'business as usual'? How do these options plan for a future that reduces car dependency and commuting, given the pandemic and climate emergency?**

It could be a step change in delivery of housing, and it could have a holistic approach to Chippenham. One of the overriding objectives is to try and improve the self-containment of Chippenham, so actually it becomes a sustainable and vibrant town in his own right moving forward so people can work and live and meet their service needs without a need to travel. That is the overarching principle of trying to plan for sustainable development, it is about delivering a critical mass. This road could potentially unlock development which could meet Chippenham's housing and job needs well into the future. It is also backed by government.

The Masterplan for the proposed development supported by the distributor road will seek to encourage more sustainable methods of transport by its design. This will be consulted on in Summer 2021.

All options provide opportunities for increased connectivity to the town centre and local centres through existing footpaths, cycle routes and potential new routes.

## **Will the consultation consider the option of not building a new road and looking for more innovative and future-facing options to meet the town's needs whilst reducing carbon emissions?**

Just to be clear we are consulting on possible road routes if a road is needed to support the development proposed in the Local Plan. We accept that a lot of people may not want to see the development or the level of development that would necessitate the need for that new distributor road. If that is the case there are two ways in which they can register their objection, either via this consultation but also via the Local Plan Review consultation [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation)

To specifically register their objection as part of the Future Chippenham consultation, the webpage [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation) provides the link to the consultation form. On this form they are not required to give their views on options around

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the road, they can move straight to saying 'other' on question number five and then question number six provides free text option for them to register their objections and why they object. This will all be captured as part of the consultation that we will be reporting on. Over and above that, on that webpage there is a link that provides an email address where they can email us directly their objection that will again be captured and recorded.

So just to summarise either through the consultation form and specific questions that exist and have existed from the start of the consultation or directly via the Future Chippenham email address that exists to capture that objection and again that's been there in place since the beginning of the consultation.

Because this question has been raised a number of times, we've taken the opportunity to put a frequently asked question on the consultation page, at the very top, to make sure that people are very clear in terms of how they can raise their objection if they want to.

## **What will be done to ensure residents of Chippenham can still access the countryside?**

With the current lockdown provisions because of the pandemic, we are all valuing the importance of access to the countryside and open space. We have not included in this presentation the infographic which sets out the overall milestones but this can be viewed at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham). We are currently consulting on road route options. After that and once through the consultation and there is a preferred road route established, we will be consulting on detailed master planning across the area. Part of that will be looking at the blue and green infrastructure network that will exist over potential development, ensuring that links are maintained or created to Public Rights of Way, cycleways and canal towpath and to look at the location and scale of green space within development as well to make sure that they are protected.

## **Is there any consideration of the River Marden's status as a rare chalk stream?**

The River Marden's status as a rare chalk stream was not assessed in the Preliminary Environmental Assessment of Options report (PEAOR) due to the design stage when the assessment was undertaken. The River Marden's status as a rare chalk stream will be assessed as part of the full environmental impact assessment to be undertaken for the road as part of the planning application if a suitable pathway for impacts on the watercourse (and its rare chalk stream designation) exists.

The assessment in the PEAOR did not find any potential effects on the River Marden as a receptor as there are no crossing proposed as part of the scheme, and because the implementation of an approved drainage design would ensure water quality in the river is maintained at existing levels.

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**Has there/will there be any reassessment of the proposals for the new road given the massive change to peoples work/ commuting that is underway as a result of COVID? The rush hour commute and associated congestion will be significantly reduced in the future.**

The transport connectivity enabled by the distributor road provides opportunities for travel by cyclists, pedestrians, buses and cars between new and existing developments and associated infrastructure.

The transport assessment for the planning application will consider forecasts for all modes of transport and the impact of COVID-19.

**I understand that much of the land in question is owned by Wiltshire Council so how much money is the council set to gain from the sale of this land?**

The council has been successful in securing £75 million out of the government's Housing Infrastructure Fund. As part of that the council has had to enter into an agreement with Homes England, the government body that administers that, about how that money would be recovered if development took place. The council, as part of that recovery strategy, had to commit to land sales receipts and borrowing as part of that strategy. Now clearly that information is commercially sensitive so we cannot share that. If a scheme does proceed then obviously more detailed costs and phasing will become defined and as that happens then the council will be able to establish what the potential gain could be from any sale of land receipts. The important point that needs to be made over and above all of this, is that the whole recovery strategy is premised on the basis that there is no cost to the council in relation to the recovery strategy of the funding.

**You say the plan sets out to meet the need for jobs and housing – what jobs? You also talk about “employment opportunities”, but what exactly does that mean?**

It is important to understand that as we move forward as proposers of the site we will be working on a detailed Masterplan and that would include talking to Economic Regeneration team and identifying what employment needs and gaps, but also importantly what opportunities there are within Chippenham as a whole. There will also be jobs from the development and, if planned well to reduce out-commuting, the services will build up in the town itself. We have already assessed capacity and it is indicatively showing about one million square foot of commercial space if the development proceeds as possible. We need to work to investigate a deeper layer of that to find out what sectors, what the market is like, there's no good just allocating employment if the market is not there. We really have to, in this post-COVID world, dig deep but it is an important question and it is one that we want to balance communities and which matches decent affordable homes for people to jobs so they can work and live in the local vicinity.

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**I understand that this consultation is specifically about the road, but in the video you mention “sustainable communities”. Please define what you mean by “sustainable communities”.**

Sustainable communities have broad definitions but, in this instance, it is about a planned community, so it means it is supported by essential infrastructure from the outset. It is supported by the roads but also the power, the drains, the schools, the medical facilities and so it promotes a more sustainable way of living so actually people can live and meet their needs and receive the services they want in the local area without having to travel many miles for those. It is also about having actually a very green community itself and building green so things are energy efficient, use energy efficient materials, use energy efficient building techniques. You have a choice and a range of sustainable transport modes rather than just solely relying on the car so it is about social equality, opportunity and economic sustainability for example. Basically, it is about trying to boost that resilience and self-containment of Chippenham as a standalone settlement rather than a satellite to other bigger settlements.

**Have any of the Planning Committee actually visited the Marden Valley?**

This is an important question as it drives the issue that we raised at the very top of the meeting the distinction between the consultation that we are taking part in now and presenting around road route options and the consultation that is taking place at the moment in relation to the Local Plan Review. A number of members of the Future Chippenham team will have visited proposed sites in the Marden Valley. It is not really our place to talk in relation to the Planning Committee, that might feel quite strange to some of the people asking the questions, but it does emphasise there is a very clear distinction in the council between this programme and the Planning Committee and the Local Planning Authority and the officers that support that.

**If the houses are rejected by the residents will the road go away.**

The funding for the road is predicated on the land coming forward for development as part of the Local Plan.

**How does this square with Wiltshire Council announcing a climate emergency last year? This appears to be highly contradictory. Wiltshire Council will apparently be "Supporting the natural environment and biodiversity within Wiltshire through development of a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy".**

The council has set a very ambitious target of becoming a carbon neutral county by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality the council will, amongst other things, need to account for carbon in its development plans. The council will also look at ways of delivering new development with reduced carbon emissions and will investigate offsetting any residual



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carbon emissions, so that net input into the atmosphere is as close to zero carbon emissions as possible.

A programme such as Future Chippenham will need to demonstrate its commitment to policies in the Local Plan and how they will be met in any of the planning applications it makes.

By having planned development, the council can also have a better opportunity to ensure development takes this into account and is a stronger way to ensure the target stays on track.

## **We have 296 houses for sale and 32 business properties, why do we need more?**

This question is better placed to be answered by Wiltshire's Spatial Planning team. We would suggest you email this question to [spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## **In responses to the consultation form, we are asked to give our preference on the 3 road options. Many people strongly oppose the road altogether, so why wasn't an option of 'No Road' included? Any statistics compiled as a result of these "consultation" answers will be skewed because of this**

If people wish to give feedback on the consultation and object to the road in principle, they are able to do so in the free text box as part of question 6 in the consultation form, or via e-mail at [futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk). All feedback will be considered by the team as part of the consultation process.

## **You note that this scheme is all subject to the outcome of current consultation, yet you have already published a PIN notice for a contractor. How is this justified and what is the supporting business case and CBR?**

If the road goes ahead the council is on a very strict timescale required by Homes England as part of the funding arrangements and therefore some of preliminary work (which doesn't commit the council at this stage) is being undertaken to assist the council to meet those tight timescales if the project goes ahead.

## **Why was addressing climate emergency not a strategic objective?**

The council has set a very ambitious target of becoming a carbon neutral county by 2030 and to achieve carbon neutrality the council will, amongst other things, need to account for carbon in its development plans. The council also looks at ways of delivering new development with reduced carbon emissions and will investigate offsetting any residual carbon emissions so that net input into the atmosphere as close to zero carbon emissions as possible can be achieved. The carbon impact and environmental impact has been taken

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into account and is one of the key considerations has been set out by Tom a programme such as Future Chippenham and we'll need to demonstrate its commitment to policies in the Local Plan and how we've been met in any of the planning applications that it makes.

**What happens if those other developers don't deliver that other part/phase of the road (to the A350 north of Chippenham)? The rest of it becomes pretty pointless doesn't it?**

The desire is to develop a comprehensive and holistic network for road and wider transport connections as part of Future Chippenham. Clearly the delivery of facilities by other developers will add to that. If those elements do not come forward, then the Future Chippenham project would still seek to deliver a network of connections, including the distributor road, to serve and access the Future Chippenham areas.

**What evidence do you have that local people want any road at all?**

This public consultation is the method we're using to gain that local feedback, if people wish to feedback, positive or negative representations on any of the routes, or no route they can complete the consultation form found at [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation) or email us at [futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk).

**You mention the scheme would include 'employment space'. We don't need any more employment space - we have lots of empty business/warehouses already.**

In the detailed master planning phase we will work with our Economic Regeneration team identifying the employment gaps and opportunities within Chippenham as a whole. At present we have assessed that there is the capacity to provide around 1 million sq ft of commercial space if the development proceeds. Future work will need to investigate the sort of commercial activity that could support.

**You say on your video that this road will help us face some of the long-standing challenges such as town centre congestion, but studies conclude that building new roads, increases congestion (especially where thousands of houses are being built). Can you agree that this statement is factually incorrect?**

Roads themselves do not actually increase traffic, it is the development that comes alongside the roads that are increasing the traffic. Clearly a scheme of this nature which will be seeing housing coming forward and commercial use as well, there will be traffic generation associated with the new developments; it is not necessarily the roads themselves that increase the traffic. What will have to happen is clearly there will be a full planning application, there will be a planning process for this, there will be a full transport assessment that will need to come forward looking at the scheme overall and that will look



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at the transport situation and identify what particular measures need to be taken. So that type of question will be dealt with through the planning process.

**Please can you say how the new road interchanges with other roads, cycle path, etc in its path, eg level-crossings, viaducts, etc?**

All junctions with the existing transport network are subject to review by the transport assessment for the road planning application. This will be designed in more detail once the preferred road route option is identified.

**The slides are very small and hard to read, is the PowerPoint going to be available?**

A recording of the presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhrsDGzoTs8>

**Will there be space to make the road a dual carriageway later?**

The proposed road is being designed as a single carriageway. We are not anticipating making an allowance for potential dualling in the way that the A350 to the west of Chippenham has come forward.

**How were environmental impacts that span zones assessed?**

A summary of the Preliminary Environmental Assessment Options Report identifies how the zones were assessed. This information can be found on the consultation webpage [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation).

**What benefits will the road deliver to the Town Centre?**

Please refer to section 10.8.3 of the Options Assessment Report (OAR) which provides information on town centre traffic flow changes for each option.

**Has the road and housing been agreed and the road options are just a distraction from the bigger questions that have already been agreed?**

The proposed road and any housing would be subject to planning consent and no planning application has been made by the Future Chippenham team at this stage.

**What consideration has been made for the future impact of greater working from home, and therefore less rush hour congestion, on the requirement for this new road?**

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The transport assessment for the road planning application will certainly consider forecasts for all modes of transport and the impact of COVID-19. We need to remember that the road is not just for motor vehicles it is a transport network enabling opportunities to travel by cyclists, pedestrians, buses and cars so the reforecasting will be reforecast of all modes of transport.

**Please can you confirm the road is to ease future congestion from the new houses rather than any existing issues?**

The distributor road is being developed to:

- Support long term growth of the town. Transport evidence indicated that future growth of the town couldn't happen without the delivery of such infrastructure. Without it, future growth would be expected to cause unacceptable impacts on the existing road network.
- It is expected that the scheme, along with appropriate wider network mitigation, could help address some existing issues on the transport network in the town, for example providing an alternative route for those travelling through the centre of the town to access the A350 and potentially providing road capacity to improve provision for pedestrians, cyclists and buses within the town.
- Provide access to the development sites in accordance with development control requirements for transport access to large development sites.

**The only time we have congestion is when there are roadworks or an accident, how will this help over the years and years of building work proposed?**

An Environmental Statement will be prepared which will provide further details on Construction Traffic and Routing as well as materials. Through the development planning process, a construction traffic management plan will be provided which will provide specific details on construction traffic and how it will be managed through the construction phase. The distributor road is not expected to have any weight restrictions, however this is subject to confirmation at the next stage where the distributor road will be designed in more detail.

**What biodiversity offsetting will you be doing?**

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 is 'no road' not presented as an option, and what evidence have you that local people want any road?**

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If people wish to give feedback on the consultation and object to the road in principle, they are able to do so in the free text box as part of question 6 in the consultation form, or via e-mail at [futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk). All feedback will be considered by the team as part of the consultation process.

**What about option 4, reject the houses and the road goes away, with the houses already built and taking off the 5,000 extra houses Wiltshire Council added to the Government numbers it is not required?**

The need for a road to support housing development has been identified within the Local Plan. Future Chippenham is consulting on three possible options for a road that could unlock the identified sites for housing development. Sustainable transport use will be a key consideration as part of the master planning work as will supporting the council's commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

You can register your objection, either via the Local Plan Review consultation [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation) or through the Future Chippenham consultation [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation).

On the Future Chippenham consultation form you are not required to give your views on options around the road, you can move straight to 'other' on question number five and then question number six provides free text option for you to register your objections and why you object. You can also email your objection in principle to [futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk).

**I have cycled around Chippenham for years and rarely use any of the cycle paths as there is no need. So why do we need more? The one on Bristol road is totally useless and wasted money.**

The Future Chippenham programme will seek to improve the use of more sustainable transport methods which would include the use of cycles. Cycle routes and pathways provide connectivity to existing developments and between any potential new development.

**The urban cross sections indicate that housing is proposed on both sides of the road alignment. Is this the intention?**

The preliminary design for the road has identified that housing could be built on either side of the road.

**Have you consulted with any users of the River Avon/Marden, such as the Canoeing Club, Sea Scouts, Angling association?**

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We have directly advised as many local groups and business as we were aware of at the beginning of the consultation itself and are actively seeking feedback from the whole community including any interest groups. In addition, to capture residents and other groups we have published the consultation in the media and via our website and social media and through consultation events throughout Chippenham and the outlying areas.

## **Do you not think it is dangerous to have cycle and pedestrian routes as one?**

Road schemes of this nature would be subject to a full independent safety audit process as the scheme evolves from feasibility through preliminary and then into detailed design. The safety audit process also involves assessment post scheme opening. Clearly the design will take on board the views and recommendations coming through that safety audit process.

## **Would the route be lit? The indicative x-sections do not show lighting.**

The road will need to accord with the relevant design standards. As a general rule, urban areas are lit and rural areas are not, but the exact details and extent of street lighting will be addressed at detailed design stage.

## **Does anyone who has proposed any of these plans actually live in Chippenham?**

The Local Plan Review will determine the type and nature of development. Many members of the team are residents of Wiltshire.

## **Approximately what year is work likely to start on building this road please? Thank you**

The commencement of the build for the potential road would be subject to gaining planning consent. Our initial programme has identified that this could commence in Winter 2022/23 if planning consent is gained.

## **By removing the farms how is sustainable local food being covered?**

Thank you for your question into the Future Chippenham road route options consultation. This question is best placed to be answered by the council's Spatial Planning team. We have therefore forwarded your question to them.

## **How much has the work so far on the road bid and consultation cost, why wasn't the public involved earlier?**

The Future Chippenham programme has secured £75 million of Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) funding to support the delivery of the potential distributor road. This includes the preliminary work required to develop the design and consultation on the road.

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The council does not as a matter of course consult on seeking funding from government.

We had originally planned for the public consultation on road route options to take place in Spring 2020, but this was delayed because of COVID-19.

**Do we actually need these roads/houses? Look what happened to the court which is now being torn down.**

This question is more appropriate to the Council's Spatial Planning team, who are progressing the Local Plan Review on behalf of the council as Local Planning Authority. Please email this question to [spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk)

**Bearing in mind most single carriageway roads are being widened, will there be allowance for widening 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.

**You assume further growth needs more road links. Have you considered different scenarios for how people could live and work in a post-pandemic future - given the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions and the likely increase in remote working?**

One of the overriding objectives is to try and improve the self-containment of Chippenham, so actually it becomes a sustainable and vibrant town in his own right moving forward so people can work and live and meet their service needs without a need to travel. That is the overarching principle of trying to plan for sustainable development, it is about delivering a critical mass. This road could potentially unlock development which could meet Chippenham's housing and job needs well into the future.

**Was the survey carried out recently? Over this winter we have had a large amount of flooding over all this area, has the future modelling accounted for this or just an average amount of rainfall?**

The scheme is utilising the Environment Agency model of flooding across the River Avon catchment. The model was built a few years ago, following a topographical survey. It included a hydrological analysis based on data gathered over the years. Although the storm events over the last winter were subsequent to the model, these events will be used to check the goodness (for example calibrate) of the model for Future Chippenham.

The scheme will be designed aiming to have negligible impact on flooding even under the 1 in a 100 year storm scenario with both the 35% and 70% climate change allowances

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included. These climate change adjustment factors are dictated by the Environment Agency based on the predicted rise in severity of storms as climate change becomes greater and more apparent.

**From an environmental point of view, you're talking a lot about visual impact, but what about the impact to the wildlife and biodiversity in the area? You have hardly mentioned them.**

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 of Options Report (PEAOR) can be considered the initial step of this EIA process.

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. This assessment carried out in the PEAOR used this data, alongside Environmental 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.

**How will the roads cross the public rights of way (for instance will bridges be provided to pedestrians to get across the road)?**

Equally important is the consideration of connections to the wider public rights of way network, and indeed with connections coming in towards Chippenham town centre. These matters will be considered as part of the overall scheme development.



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## **Which option delivers the most traffic benefits to the town centre?**

Please refer to section 10.8.3 of the Options Assessment Report (OAR) which provides information on town centre traffic flow changes for each option.

## **Will you commit to reinstate the Wilts & Berks canal crossing with the A4 as part of this scheme? This will future proof the canal regeneration.**

We are committed to working with Wilts & Berks Canal Trust and its members to seek opportunities to support the aspirations for the Canal now and in the future.

## **How does this fit in with the government's legally binding obligations on the net zero emissions enshrined in law June 2019? Proved through the Heathrow story.**

The construction of the road scheme would be unlikely to lead to a significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions on its own, when compared against the government's legally binding climate reduction obligations and would not include a large percentage of carbon emissions compared to the reduction targets. We are nonetheless committed to drive carbon reduction in construction and operation through our design in light of our own greenhouse gas reduction targets.

The road itself is unlikely to actually generate substantially more emissions during operation as it will be unlikely to generate further traffic movements on its own outside of when maintenance works are required. However, the housing it will bring forward does have the potential to increase traffic movements and therefore greenhouse gas emissions in the local area. The amount of movements and therefore greenhouse gases the housing will generate from travel will be mitigated through the careful integration of public transport and active travel connectivity to existing services to reduce emissions, as well as further measures to encourage efficient vehicle usage.

## **Could you separate out the environmental impacts so that ecological and climate impacts are considered separately to heritage and aesthetic impacts?**

The options were all assessed separately per environmental topic per zone within the Preliminary Environmental Assessment of Options Report (PEAOR). The environmental topics assessed were:

- Air quality
- Noise
- The water environment
- Landscape
- Cultural heritage
- Biodiversity

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- Soils and geology
- Materials and Waste
- Population and health
- Climate change effects

Vulnerability to climate change (no option preferences selected)

A summary of the main findings of these assessments is outlined in the PEAOR Non-technical summary document that was produced for this consultation and is available on the webpage <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation>

The assessments in the PEAOR attempted to define the potential significance of effects of environmental impacts of the various options as well as a preference of options per zone based on that specific topic area. This meant that options were scored wherever possible to understand the preference even if slight, between them. The Options Assessment Report (OAR) took the findings of the PEAOR and gave them a scoring. This scoring was equally weighted between topics, but it focused on avoiding more significant potential environmental effects and focused on key differentiators between the options. To make best use of the time available, focusing on the key differentiators in environmental effects was the approach also used for the webinar. As noted above, summaries of the key preferences per topic area per zone are available in Chapter 5 of the PEAOR Non-Technical Summary document.

**Please explain in terms easier to understand. Will this and the housing go ahead in some form and so this is just a minor exercise in road planning as a distraction?**

The Local Plan Review will determine the 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 the Local Plan consultation too and we would encourage you to do so.

**You repeatedly refer to environmental "screening" as an environmental impact. But what impact does each route have on environmental habitat and introducing infrastructure that will irreversibly affect the landscape forever?**

References to screening were generally made to note how visual impacts can potentially be mitigated through the design of the scheme.

During the webinar, it was outlined that across all zones, Option A has the potential to cause significant impacts on landscape character, and on views from the south and east due to its generally higher alignment and location within the local landscape. Whilst minor adverse impacts are likely under Options B and C, these are unlikely to be significant in assessment terms as the way they follow the topography allows them to be better

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integrated within the existing environment. Generally speaking, Options B and C follow low points in the existing topography so they do not stand out in long-term views, which, when combined with matured screening vegetation, would make them not significant in landscape terms.

In respect of impacts on biodiversity, this was not discussed in detail due to the time limitations of that event and that the discussion was focusing on the differentiators in the options that led to the current identified preferred route in the options appraisal process thus far. In most zones, the biodiversity impacts between the options was found to be broadly similar, which means they were not referenced as much in the webinar. Whilst we have identified some potential impacts on biodiversity in the Preliminary Environmental Assessment of Options Report largely focused on the loss of existing hedgerow and field boundary features, it is hoped that with the careful integration of mitigation measures in our design that these impacts can be mitigated.

## **Which consultation is for representations on the principle of the Future Chippenham housing and commercial development and this distributor road, and when is its deadline?**

The Local Plan Review is for representations on the principle of the Future Chippenham housing and commercial development. This consultation ends at 23:59 on Tuesday 9 March 2021. [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review-consultation)  
Future Chippenham is consulting on the potential distributor road route options. This consultation ends at 5pm on Friday 12 March 2021. [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation)

## **The majority of people are totally unaware of these plans. To ensure a full consultation, why hasn't a letter been sent out to each household giving details of how they may object?**

Letters were sent out to those residents who would be directly affected by each of the potential road route options to make them aware of the consultation. Whilst this consultation has been more digitally focused due to COVID restrictions, so as well as our public webinars, we have been to Area Board meetings, Town and Parish Council meetings where we have asked for suggestions on ways to reach people especially those residents who may not have access digitally. Hard copies of the consultation materials can be collected from Monkton Park or we can send them by post. We have advertised the consultation through promotional posters and flyers in the town, through the media and on social media. We also extended the consultation period to eight weeks to take account of the current COVID restrictions.

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**Why build any of this on the flood plain? 1 in 1000 year events have become 1 in 10 thanks to global warming. Surely nothing should be built below the 50m contour line?**

The designs presented in the consultation do not include any structures within the floodplain. In terms of flood risk, the preferred option would be to have a viaduct structure over the entire length of the 100 year + climate change floodplain, to allow water to pass underneath the highway. Should any embankments be built within the floodplain, accurate flood mitigation measures will be implemented to avoid increase flood risk across the site and/or elsewhere, as per Environment Agency guidance.

**Your plans will damage to the character of Chippenham – a small market town - as well as surrounding villages. It will destroy much of what local people value about living here, with absolutely no guarantee of any future benefits for the town.**

The Local Plan Review will determine the 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 the Local Plan consultation too and we would encourage you to do so.

**Are there going to be segregated crossings where cycle routes cross the proposed route for instance where cyclists will not need to dismount and cross at different levels?**

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.

**Why don't Chippenham's views count and only the village's views?**

This consultation is seeking feedback from all residents and other stakeholders in and around Chippenham and welcome all feedback.

**Will there be cycle routes along all road options?**

The initial designs for the potential road and potential housing will seek opportunities for cycle paths alongside the road and through the developments themselves.

**How was relative carbon cost of non-infrastructure alternatives to a road accounted for in the options sifting?**

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The relative cost of a non-infrastructure alternative was not explored as part of the preliminary environmental assessment of options as the road is proposed should it be required to unlock and deliver anticipated future housing needs.

**How will you ensure pedestrian and cyclist safety along the national cycle network between Chippenham and Calne? This is very well used and where options B and C cross in particular have many families with children and dogs walking and cycling. Bridges or underpasses would definitely be needed! Has Sustrans been involved/informed?**

Crossings will be provided where any Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are bisected. Crossing types will be determined following the preferred options selection.

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

Public Rights of Way 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.

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.

The information above very much informs the process that will take place and following selection of the preferred distributor road route we will be advancing the design of the road and coordinating this with the Masterplan layouts for the adjacent land developments, and liaising with Sustrans. The preliminary design for the planning application for the distributor road will also be subject to an independent road safety audit.

**What's the proposal for how the road would cross the Chippenham-Calne cycle path? Will there be a bridge over it?**

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).

**Have you surveyed the area for bombs? Abbeyfield School had bombs and these obviously had to be removed before construction could go ahead.**

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As part of the Preliminary Environmental Assessment of Options Report (PEAOR), the likelihood of unexploded ordnance being found on site was scored low following a search with ZeticaUXO.com. At this stage, as the desk study found a low risk of Unexploded Ordnance on site, no further surveys are anticipated to be required.

## **Can a record of all the questions asked and the answers please be made available?**

A record of all questions asked with answers will be sent to all those registering to attend this webinar. This will also be published on our website.

## **If the intention is to in-fill with housing why is so much attention being given to visual impact to existing housing such as Monkton Park?**

As part of the Options Assessment Report a visual impact assessment is completed on the existing environment.

## **What is proposed for the junction with Stanley Lane?**

All junctions with the existing transport network are subject to review by the transport assessment for the road planning application. Layouts for the surrounding residential developments will influence the type of junction and designated use of Stanley Lane, any changes will be subject to planning approval.

## **Harden's Farm is from 1781, how can you destroy that?**

The Preliminary Environmental Assessment of options and Options Assessment Report considers in detail the impact on cultural heritage. These documents can be found here: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation). Consultation is also being undertaken with statutory consultees, English Heritage.

## **Considering the 3 proposed routes I would like to know the cost, in cash terms, for each. Does the projected cost of any of them come in below the £75 million HIF grant? Where will the additional cost of the road be funded from?**

The potential costs for each of the road route options is detailed in the Options Assessment Report which can be found on the consultation webpage in section 10.10 and are budgets at this stage.

None of the potential budgets come in below the value of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) grant. The recovery of the HIF grant will ultimately be reinvested back into the scheme to fund any costs above the initial grant.



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**Considering the 3 proposed routes I would like to know the cost, in social terms, for each. I am interested in the social cost to Chippenham and the wider community, and how this has been calculated.**

The Options Assessment Report assesses each route option in terms of environmental impact, deliverability, transport network impacts and value for money. The environmental impact of each route includes detailed consideration of impact on Population and Health. This report can be found here: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation).

**Considering the 3 proposed routes I would like to know the comparative costs for each in terms of carbon emissions. It is almost 2 years since Wiltshire Council declared a climate emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030. This proposed road could have a considerable impact on this pledge, so, I would like to know the comparative emissions for each route, including emissions in excavated the ground, emissions for construction, including manufacturing materials and bringing materials to site and any other associated emissions.**

The assessment of carbon emissions during construction included in the Preliminary Environmental Options Assessment Report which informed the Options Assessment Report did not include quantification of the carbon emissions of the scheme during construction or operation. The quantification of these emissions during construction and operation of the road will be done as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process that will inform and Environmental Statement to be submitted as part of the planning application.

However, it was still possible to undertake a comparison-style carbon assessment using the experience gained from numerous other projects, and using key indicators provided by the design team. For example, concrete is an incredibly carbon dense construction material and therefore it is simple to identify the potential better solutions in respect of carbon emissions by looking at this indicator. Similarly, the identification of route lengths is also a key indicator. Whilst the assessment was undertaken in zones, generally speaking Option C was the 'best fit' route from a carbon emissions perspective due to its combination of having the shortest route and also decreased concrete requirements as a result of the shorter southern viaduct.

**I would like to ask the same questions for a 4th option of no road at all. What would be its cost in cash, social and carbon emissions.**

Without a road it is likely that Wiltshire's housing need would not be met for 2036. If housing need is not met, then it leaves the community open to ad hoc development with less ability to develop a co-ordinated and planned community.

**So your offering options before a survey has taken place? Is that allowed?**

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Preliminary surveys have taken place and further surveys will follow. We are consulting on three road options and would welcome your feedback and comments either by filing in our consultation survey, found on our consultation webpage [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation) or email us at [futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk) or alternatively send a written response to the Future Chippenham team, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN.

## **Will the source data for the options assessment scoring be made publicly available?**

Relevant source data for the options assessment scoring can be made available to the public. Please advise if there is a specific set of data required and note that the options assessment will be updated to consider feedback from the public, feedback from other stakeholders including landowners and developers and input from environmental field surveys and flood modelling.

## **Option C keeps being mentioned as better for less visual impact. Surely option C followed by B would have greater visual impact for existing residents of Chippenham. Is this assessment considering existing residents and impact on them or just considering impact on those living outside Chippenham or travelling through?**

There has been understandable interest in views from Chippenham out towards the site. The main receptor groups for views out from Chippenham are at Pewsham and Monkton Park respectively. These receptor groups are considered in the assessment in the options appraisal.

The semi-circular edge of the residential development in Pewsham has a well-defined vegetation screen that largely prevents views across the study area in question although some properties do retain views above this. However, Options B and C still remain visually un-obtrusive due to their location within the existing topography. Option C approaches from the west parallel to Pewsham Way, it is screened by the existing topography by being on the other side of a small hill behind the lane to Middle Lodge Farm. Likewise, Option B is on the other side of this rise and is even lower in the existing topography before both options combine east of Middle Lodge Farm. The scheme may be partially within some views at this location as it bridges the proposed regenerated Wilts and Berks Canal route, but this would be a small section, and is also well-screened by existing field boundaries in the area. After bridging the proposed canal route, the scheme again falls behind existing vegetation cover between the options and Pewsham.

The edge of Monkton Park development is again vegetated along the rear end of the development and along the River Avon corridor, but views across farmland are greater than in Pewsham. Options B and C will be largely shielded from views by following lower lying topography to come partially within views from Monkton Park behind Harden's Farm and

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existing vegetation as the scheme approaches the National Cycle Route. With mitigation in the form of localised landscape screening mounds, and compensatory screening planting in keeping with current field boundary vegetation, the impact of the road is expected to not be significant in views as it would not dominate the existing landscape.

## **What considerations and mitigations have been considered to protect the vast local wildlife and ancient trees/established hedgerows we have in this area please?**

At this early optioneering stage, mitigations to prevent impacts on protected species have largely focused on avoidance measures to avoid locations of likely better habitat and distinguishable features like mature hedgerows. However, the assessment in the Preliminary Environmental Assessment Options Report (PEAOR) assessed the potential impacts of the scheme on protected species and found that generally, the worst impacts from the various options were likely to come from segregation of existing commuting routes used by protected species to navigate their way across the field network. With this identified, mitigation in the Environmental Statement will largely be focused around maintaining and improving existing field margins across the site and ensuring connectivity either side of the road is possible for these protected species. Habitat creation through integration with the Sustainable Urban Drainage System and landscape planting will also be used to further provide opportunities for biodiversity to flourish.

## **Shouldn't next steps include alignment with Core Strategy review as the need may not be demonstrated through that exercise?**

The Local Plan Review is a parallel exercise and subject to a separate consultation. The Masterplan for the Future Chippenham development will consider alignment with the Local Plan Review and as a developer Future Chippenham will provide comments on this separate consultation where we feel this is appropriate.

Proposals for the Future Chippenham development will be consulted on later in 2021 and will use the preferred road route as part of the input data to inform the Masterplan.

## **Will these assessments be better advertised better than the other consultations with a better time frame?**

The Stakeholder and Community Engagement Strategy for the Future Chippenham programme was published at October 2020 Cabinet. The programme team will continue to provide details of the forward plan of events in advance wherever possible on its webpage.

## **It seems like you have already made up your minds. Is there an option for no road at all?**

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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 e-mailing [futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto: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.

## **The council is acting as landowner, strategic planner and scheme promoter. How is it demonstrating that conflicts of interest are being appropriately managed?**

The Future Chippenham Programme team encompass the role of landowner and promoter and this is completely separate from the Local Planning Authority role. The governance of the programme is robust and ensures that no conflicts of interest occur.

## **Is there something I am missing? A good road study, planned for 2022/23, but no application for the road or the housing? Tell me I am wrong?**

The planning application for the road and associated Masterplan will be submitted in Winter 2021. This consultation is to gain feedback to inform the road route that will be selected to form that planning application.

## **How do you analysis the feedback, how do we know what to aim for?**

This question is unclear. However for clarity, all responses received via the consultation survey or in writing to the Future Chippenham team will be considered to inform the road route option selection. Feedback is being sought from all stakeholders, residents, landowners and commercial businesses.

## **How can you offset carbon emissions when you will destroy important habitat and biodiversity in the building of this road?**

At this stage no quantified assessment of carbon emissions has been undertaken. An assessment comparing the options in respect of their potential carbon emissions has been undertaken for the Preliminary Environmental Options Assessment Report (PEOAR). When a preferred route has been announced and the scheme progresses towards a planning application, quantification of carbon emissions from the scheme will be undertaken as part

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of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be undertaken to support this planning application.

**This is a really clear presentation thank you. Why are we not following route C from start to finish and why can it not be 2 lanes with an optional 3rd (overtaking lane)?**

All feedback received as part of this consultation will be considered in deciding on the preferred route. We would encourage you to feedback on the consultation form or in writing by email or letter to the address on the webpage [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham-consultation).

**Chippenham lacks an east-west distributor road. It already has a north-south route in the A350. Why is the Eastern link road needed for improving traffic flow and congestion?**

The potential road provides a link to the existing A350 to the North and South of Chippenham. The road options being consulted upon all lie to the east because that is where the Future Chippenham development areas are located.

**In working out the carbon budget has the impact of digging the ground and carbon stored being released been calculated and if not, why not?**

The scheme has not undertaken any quantitative assessment of carbon emissions from the construction of the scheme at this point in time due to the early optioneering design stage where we are consulting on this scheme. At this optioneering design stage, there is typically not enough robust information regarding material quantities and types to allow an accurate carbon cost of the scheme to be made, so a comparative assessment between the different options is the most appropriate and proportionate method. When a preferred option has been selected, carbon reduction will be a key factor of ongoing design development to ensure construction carbon costs are as minimal as possible, as well as designing infrastructure itself to be operationally efficient. The greenhouse gas emissions from construction and operation of the highway will be presented in the Environmental Statement that will accompany the planning application.

**Wiltshire Council is consulting about this because of an ageing population leading to 7500 homes. All of this way in the days before COVID. Should the whole consultation not be rethought in light of the new world we live in?**

COVID implications will continue to be reviewed throughout the lifecycle of the programme. However, the need for housing is unlikely to significantly change.

**Off-setting carbon is being increasing viewed as a bit of a cop out. Should Wiltshire simply not be increasing any carbon to meet its climate emergency commitments?**

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Any development including Future Chippenham will need to be policy compliant.

## **Have any of the 'experts' actually visited the area?**

We can confirm that members of the Future Chippenham team and its design team have visited the proposed site.

## **Why build to the South and East, so prone to floods, and complicated by the canal, when the North and West don't have these issues? Where is the evidence for Chippenham needing 7500 houses?**

These questions are best placed to be answered by the council's Spatial Planning team. Please email [spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## **I thought the road was meant to open up Monkton Park. Can you outline how the road will allow further road networks in and out of Monkton?**

The access road connecting from the eastern distributor road to Monkton Park is part of a separate planning application for the Rawlings Green development site and is delivered by other developers. Further details for this are available on Wiltshire Council's planning portal.

## **How does thinking regressively and building a huge new road (plus associated houses) on green land, destroying carbon sinks and emitting huge amounts of carbon during construction, align with Wiltshire Council's work to become carbon neutral by 2030?**

As mentioned above, the council has set an ambitious target of becoming a carbon neutral county by 2030. To achieve carbon neutrality the council will, amongst other things, need to account for carbon in its development plans. The council will also look at ways of delivering new developments with reduced carbon emissions and will investigate offsetting any residual carbon emissions, so that the net input into the atmosphere is as close to zero carbon emissions as possible.

A programme such as Future Chippenham will need to demonstrate its commitment to policies in the Local Plan and how they will be met in any of the planning applications it makes.

## **What speed limit be on the road?**

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

## **Is there any compulsory purchase required for and part of this scheme?**



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Compulsory Purchase Orders will be considered at the appropriate time in the programme and will be only be implemented as a last resort.