Dear Sir,

We would like to comment on the above planning application and draw your attention to some aspects of this application which we consider are ill-conceived or flawed.

We are not against this development in principle. We appreciate there is need for further housing in Chippenham and the local council is under pressure to deliver on housing development targets set by the government.

However, we do have major concerns over the ability of the existing infrastructure, particularly highways, to cope with the massive increase in the number of homes in the area.

We would also like to make a point about the timing of this application, which was submitted on the 23rd of December. A cynic may say that this was a deliberate ploy by the developers in the hope that the Christmas period would deter and detract interested parties from digesting what is a verbose and voluminous application, thus reducing the number of comments and objections.

Our comments are as follows…

Highways

It would appear that the data used in the provision of the Chippenham PARAMICS model was taken from a survey dated March & April 2008 (Figures 8.8 & 8.9) and is therefore out of date.

Indeed, the results from 2008 already show some queuing on the Patterdown Road, and this data does not take into account the now complete development at Coppice Close or the current development on Rowden Lane which combined will total approx. 300 homes.

Add to this the current proposal to prevent access and egress to the A4 Rowden Hill from Rowden Lane, means that all traffic from the Rowden Manor hamlet, existing residential and commercial sites on Rowden Lane and the current Rowden Lane development will be directed through, and join with existing traffic, from Coppice Close on to Patterdown Road.
With the inevitable increase in queue length around the Patterdown Road/A4 Rowden Hill roundabout that will be incurred from this proposed development it is envisaged that at peak times it will be practically impossible to exit right from Coppice Close.

Coppice Close also has an issue whereby cars are being parked on both sides of the highway, effectively making it a single vehicle width in places.

Anecdotal evidence seems to suggest that residents of Coppice Close are already having to endure increased exit times, in some instances of up to half an hour.

Furthermore, the Wiltshire Council Core Strategy’s proposed plans to redevelop Chippenham Town centre will, if successful, bring additional traffic from the surrounding area, such as Melksham, which will inevitably add to traffic on both Patterdown Road and the A4 Rowden Hill.

We strongly feel that the traffic assessment must be undertaken again to provide a true and accurate picture of current and predicted congestion and that any application cannot be granted until such time as this has been undertaken and the results reassessed.

**Schools**

The environmental survey document estimates an increase in pupil numbers from the whole of the Rowden Country Park development to be 210, and 462 for all developments granted or proposed within Chippenham (including those from this site). However, the only school with spaces currently available is Abbeyfield, so children will need to travel there. Currently, the only way to get to Abbeyfield School from the west of Chippenham is via Rowden Hill /Avenue Le Fleche therefore further exacerbating the issues detailed in the previous Highways section.

Additionally, the topic of additional school places is referred for ‘Section 106 agreement’. We would suggest that development cannot go ahead without guaranteed infrastructure to support the predicted levels of school places required.

**Rowden Manor Hamlet**

As residents of the Rowden Manor Hamlet we obviously have some concerns over the proposed Rowden Park proposal over and above those of general traffic congestion and access.

1. The proposal aims to highlight the historical significance of the Rowden Manor hamlet but does not take into account that the historically significant aspects are contained on private property that can only be accessed via the privately owned part of Rowden Lane. It is a concern that the proposal will encourage visitors to the park to inadvertently stray and trespass onto private property. We would like to know what mitigation has been proposed for this issue.

2. Another concern is that of privacy and security of our property and those of our neighbours. The northern boundary of our property borders the field that sweep down
towards the river, and currently are rather porous and do not offer much in the way of either physical or visible protection with respect to our property. This is fine whilst the designation of the bordering fields is agricultural but we strongly feel that if the land designation were to change to public recreational land then our boundaries should in some way be protected. There is currently a barbed wire fence approx. 2 meters from our boundary which we would like to see as a minimum turned into protective hedging. Some preliminary pre-consultation discussions have taken place but any firm undertaking to this effect has not been forthcoming.

3. Rowden Lane is the hamlet's only method of access and egress to and from the properties therein. As such there is a concern over the intersections between the lane and the proposed cycle and footpaths that will cross it and what measures will be put in place to ensure the safety of all parties, be it vehicular (including service vehicles such as refuse collection and delivery services) and pedestrians and cyclists.

The results of pre-application consultations with the residents of the hamlet that raised this issue appear to have been considered as ‘detailed design’ and as such not part of the application. However, we would suggest that given the whole proposal basically hinges on the ‘green’ links to the town centre and the park that such safety issues cannot be overlooked at the application stage.

Yours faithfully,

Signed copy on file

M D & K Newbury