**On Line Comments**

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<th>14/12118/OUT</th>
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**Comments:**

Dear Sirs

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to comment on the planning application for Rowden Park (14/12118/OUT).

I appreciate the need for additional housing, and note that Chippenham has been identified by Wiltshire Council as an area for housing growth. However, I would like to echo the comments made by Lacock Parish Council in their representation regarding the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the requirement for the preparation of a new plan for development in Chippenham (the Chippenham Site Allocations DPD). In the absence of this plan, I consider that it would be premature to consider this planning application, and would request that the decision is delayed until that plan has been finalised. I acknowledge that the current application is only for outline planning, but an approval at this stage is still an approval in principle, and if it turns out not to be in line with the Chippenham Site Allocations DPD then this would be a failure of the planning system. What is the point of strategic planning, after all, if individual applications are considered in a piecemeal fashion with no recourse to strategic planning documentation?

I note that many of the plans and aerial photographs are out of date, and do not show either existing development on the north western boundary of the site (Coppice Close/Brooklands) or indeed the work which is ongoing by Redcliffe in development of areas adjacent to Rowden Lane. This should be corrected, since it is not possible to present an adequate cumulative assessment of development in the area without this information.

My main concern relates to traffic impact. I appreciate that improvements to cycle/pathways are planned, but I think that the assessment which has been undertaken has been overly optimistic regarding the number of journeys which will be ‘saved’ through residents making sustainable journeys rather than using their cars. It is inevitable that traffic levels up Patterdown Road and onto the A4 will increase as a result of this development, since the Avon forms a natural barrier to the east of the site and prevents traffic being routed in that direction. All towards-Chippenham traffic is likely to route in this direction, and having lived in the area for just 18 months I am already more than aware of the traffic issues on the A4 and at the junction with Patterdown Road. 1000 extra houses in this area is a huge increase in cars using the road, and I am very concerned about the impact this will have on the road system.

I note that the response of the developer to traffic concerns raised by residents of Coppice Close was simply to suggest parking restrictions in the road. This suggestion (which has also been included in a rather terse letter delivered to residents following some complaints about the construction traffic using Coppice Close) is unhelpful. The width of the road in Coppice Close is simply inadequate to carry the volume of traffic which it is intended to take, and the parking allocations for the housing are inadequate to accommodate the number of cars owned by residents. Additional housing will only make this worse, and parking restrictions on the road will make it impossible for people to park near their
houses. I would suggest that the developer takes a rather more constructive attitude to working with local residents to manage their concerns and to allow any accepted development to be undertaken in a sensitive way. May I also take this opportunity to state that the way in which the documentation has been provided has made it remarkably difficult to evaluate this application. The download from the website contained 157 separate files which did not have names which adequately described their contents, and which were not arranged in a manner which made the application easy to follow. It was only after clicking through over 80 plans, photos and technical reports in a jumbled order that I stumbled on the Environmental Statement. Since I have a background in planning, and know roughly what I am looking for, I was able to skim read much of the information, and I was prepared to take the time to look for what I was interested in. I do wonder how many other members of the public will have had the time, inclination or ability to do the same – which must call into doubt their ability to adequately comment on the application as a whole. This is a sad situation for such a large development which will no doubt have a significant impact on the lives of many residents.

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