



Wickham and Knowle Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of the above Council held at Knowle Village Hall, Knowle Avenue, Fareham, PO17 5GR on Thursday 10th October 2024 at 7:02pm.

Present: Councillors: Craig Manuel (Chair), Robert Broad, Malc Burt, Sheila Chambers, David Evans, Leah Greenbank, Kathryn Holladay (Vice-Chair), Nic Holladay, Sandy Phillips-Lee, Ben Sawyers

In attendance: District Councillor Chris Chamberlain, 2 members of the public, Parish Clerk Sophie Thorogood, Locum Clerk Tracey Molloy

Prior to the agenda starting, Cllr Manuel gave a brief recap as to why an extra meeting had been called regarding the Winchester City Council (WCC) Regulation 19 Local Plan. The Parish Council was initially allocated 200 homes in Knowle, which WCC confirmed in writing that these homes would count in the Local Plan. WCC changed their mind and the 200 homes would no longer count and an extra 100 homes would have to be allocated within Wickham. The Parish Council objected to this and asked to be consulted. WCC did not consult with the Parish Council and selected 2 sites – 60 homes at the Glebe and 40 homes at Mill Lane. The Parish Council have to submit a representation to the Local Plan consultation.

Options are:

- a) To agree with WCC for the allocation of homes across the 2 sites in Wickham
- b) To support 100 homes all being allocated to the Glebe
- c) To support 100 homes on the Mayles Farm site, which although is in the strategic gap, is being offered with community benefits of Wickham Water Meadows, 40 hectares of open space, a full-size adult grass football pitch and a junior grass football pitch.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Councillor Loraine Rappé, District Councillor Angela Clear, District Councillor Neil Cutler

2. **Declarations of interest:** Cllr Manuel declared an interest in item 4 as the house builders may be customers of his company.

3. **Public Session:** A member of public (MOP) who lives on the south side of Wickham adjacent to the Mayles Farm site, spoke to highlight 4 key points of concern. He had seen sight of the Council's proposed draft reply to the Regulation 19 consultation:

- The MOP was surprised that the Council is considering supporting the Mayles Farm site and questions whether the Council has a mandate to do so. There is a clear WCC policy on the settlement gap between Wickham and Welborne which predecessors had fought hard to maintain. He had not been able to find the Parish Council's consultation response from May 2022 on the WCC website.
- The MOP questioned where this site had come from, that no information was contained on the Parish website, and felt that the site was surfacing only 3 days before the end of the consultation period. WCC held a public consultation event at the Wickham Community Centre on 17th September, the Parish Council were not in attendance. He commented that the Parish Council are not being open or transparent and the draft letter contains contentious statements. There is no audit trail that this site received greatest number of resident's support during the last consultation in May 2022.

- There is no mention of the planning application submitted by the developer behind the Mayles Farm site for the new entrance from the site onto the A32 at Hoad's Hill. Both the Parish and County Councils have objected to this planning application.
- The most important point is that any development on the settlement boundary must have community support. The MOP does not feel there is any community support for this site from the May 2022 consultation.

Overall, the MOP the Parish Council should work on a Neighbourhood Plan to identify the most suitable sites, as the next part of the Local Plan does not begin until 2030.

District Cllr Chamberlain spoke to comment that he does not see Cllr Manuel's summary as a fair reflection of the dialogue with WCC. At the Regulation 18 stage it was made clear in writing that there was always an option that WCC would need to come back to re-visit the site options. There has been significant change in Councillors since that original letter. Cllr Chamberlain's understanding is that as part of the Regulation 18 pre-consultation process, WCC Officers had written to the Parish Council and not received a written reply, and meetings had been held with the Parish Councillors about the sites.

Cllr Manuel disagreed with the statement that letters received from WCC have not been replied to. Cllr Manuel is frustrated that the Parish has been allocated 200 homes in Knowle Village, which is within the strategic gap, that are not counting in the Local Plan allocation. If the criteria contained within the Local Plan was used, Knowle should receive no homes as there are no amenities. This is a very emotional topic, and the Council is now left with a difficult dilemma that 100 extra homes will be built in Wickham whether or not the Parish Council supports it.

The Locum Clerk spoke to say that the 6-week Local Plan consultation process has been pushed through during the school summer holidays which left the Parish Council unable to carry out their own consultation. The Parish Council therefore had to use the results of the May 2022 consultation to formulate their response. The representation issues have passed through both Planning Committee and Full Council in September 2024 meetings, with Macra presenting their development to Planning Committee which no members of public attended. Therefore, this site has not suddenly be put forward 3 days before the consultation deadline, the Parish Council has followed proper process and due diligence to reach the stage where the Councillors are sufficiently informed and have the background information to reach their decision.

Cllr Manuel commented that of course the Parish Council would have preferred more time to consult with the Wickham residents but were under pressure to make the decision and submit the representation before the deadline.

The May 2022 consultation was shown on the projector to everyone present which showed that the Mayles Farm site was the preferred site at that point. The ranking was Mayles Farm, the Glebe then Mill Lane as first choice, second choice, third choice. The Parish Council had to use this previous consultation to help formulate their response.

There is no option to request an extension to the consultation deadline.

4. Approve the representation to the WCC Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation:

The options being put forward to the Councillors are as above. There had been a long discussion at the 26th September Full Council meeting regarding the options and Macra

had since given the Parish Council details of the community benefits being offered in writing as had been requested at the last meeting.

Cllr K Holladay expressed concerns that the Parish Council has not been able to consult with the residents. The Locum Clerk replied that the Inspector will not be looking at the finer process details, but instead focusing on testing how sound the proposed Local Plan is.

Cllr N Holladay commented that whilst sympathetic to the MOP's viewpoint, the site being proposed at Mayles Farm is large at 210 hectares and that limited development within the settlement boundary is allowed under a policy NE7 within the Local Plan.

Cllr Chambers commented that when Macra presented to the Parish Council, they stated that they had met with the adjacent residents to the Mayles Farm site and had their support for the development. The MOP confirmed that this was not accurate; the residents had met with Macra but this was some time ago, but had not given their support to the site.

A representative from the Planning Agent attending the meeting linked to Macra replied that the only comment was that they had consulted with the residents, not that they had the resident's support. Information had been provided to the Parish Council including maps and details of the land being offered. The development offers a way to help protect the strategic gap in perpetuity by giving the open space and therefore the control, to the Parish Council.

Cllr Phillips-Lee asked the Planning Agent about the description of a green buffer being offered to the residents along the site to protect their gardens.

- a) *To agree with WCC for the allocation of homes across the 2 sites in Wickham – no votes were made for this option*
- b) *To support 100 homes all being allocated to the Glebe -*
- c) *To support 100 homes on the Mayles Farm site – 7 votes were made.*

RESOLVED: to approve supporting 100 homes on the Mayles Farm site in Wickham, and to delegate to the Locum Clerk to submit the representation confirming this, as proposed by Cllr N Holladay, seconded by Cllr Sawyers, and carried with abstentions from Cllr Manuel, Cllr Burt and Cllr Chambers.

Meeting closed 7:47pm

Signed.....

Date.....