

Wickham Residents' Association - News Update

MILL LANE SPORTS & RECREATION SITE PROPOSAL

A Mill Lane Forum and Steering Group (MLFSG) meeting was held on January 19th.

Chris Chamberlain (independent Chair of the MLFSG) had completed a considerable amount of work since the last meeting and produced for discussion detailed analyses of the prioritisation of potential facilities at the site that had been generated at the previous meeting of stakeholders in December. In addition, he obtained a draft financial projection for a 3G adult football pitch from the Parish Council and presented this together with work he had produced on projections for other facilities.

These two pieces of work were made available to stakeholders only a few days before the meeting on January 20th and so there had been limited time to examine them. However, WRA had at least been able to scrutinise and analyse the prioritisation document and the Council's financial projections for revenue and costs expected from a 3G adult pitch, which, if it goes ahead, will be by far the most significant generator of revenue and costs at the site. A constructive and detailed discussion of these took place and identified several issues that need clarification and further review. Several actions were agreed upon that will: 1) help move the work of prioritisation forward; 2) strengthen the evidence base behind prioritised options; 3) test financial assumptions and



forecasts. It was agreed that these actions would take place in the next two weeks and outcomes brought forward for consideration at next month's MLFSG meeting.

The Chair informed the meeting that the Council had entered pre-application discussions with Winchester City Council, and these had resulted in the Council being asked to provide further information, particularly as to traffic and access. It was also stated that the planning application process is likely to take somewhat longer than previously anticipated. Hopefully, this will give the MLFSG time to deliver really well-researched recommendations to the Council.

To assist stakeholders to consider all the relevant evidence, an online library of documents pertinent to deliberations about the Mill Lane site has been established for their use. To date, WRA has provided all but one of the pieces of evidence from stakeholders submitted to the document library.

WRA is working closely with Knowle Residents' Association and Wickham Society to make sure residents' views are being heard and 2023 has started constructively, the MLFSG getting down to some serious detail at the January

meeting. Our appreciation goes to Chris Chamberlain for his fair approach and hard work at, and between, meetings.

TITCHFIELD LANE - SOLAR FARM PROPOSAL Planning application (HCC/2021/0701) Whilst there has been no further information from Hampshire County Council following the close of the public consultation on 30 November 2022 - **there were 196 public responses to this application with 116 clear objections citing traffic & safety concerns.** The WRA would like to thank everyone who responded to the public consultation including our members.

Wickham & Knowle Parish Council submitted the following extracted response; "The documents fail to demonstrate proposals to adequately mitigate for the impact of HGVs on roads unsuitable for large vehicles, particularly at the pinch points. We understand this is acknowledged by the applicant and that swept path analysis will be carried out along the proposed routes as part of a highways safety audit. The outcome of this study is awaited. ^{Note1}

Lorry routing needs to avoid Titchfield Lane, Mill Lane and the A334 through Wickham for this reason. The need has still not been adequately demonstrated. Large sites such as Welborne, North Whiteley and West of Waterlooville are likely to reuse subsoil and topsoil generated so create little demand for cart away."

Note 1: *This study is privately commissioned by the applicant, SLR and the traffic survey company Vectos is itself a subsidiary of SLR! The WRA attended a Parish Council Planning meeting on 17th November where Mr Alistair Pike of Vectos indicated the survey was unlikely to be made public!*

The responses can be viewed at <https://planning.hants.gov.uk/Planning/Display/HCC/2021/0701#> under Public Representations & Consultations Responses tabs.

To reiterate - Landfill & Traffic Safety

The applicant, SLR, proposes to construct a Solar Farm on the former Funtley Refuse tip in Titchfield Lane and import 1.15 million tons of landfill to build up site levels. This is very odd as their previous application for this solar farm (WCC 19/01153/FUL) did not require any landfill and was approved by Winchester County Council. The applicant has stated that the probable source of the landfill material is the Welborne development.

If this proves to be the case, this unnecessary landfill would result in 84x 30-Ton HGV lorries daily passing through Wickham via Winchester Road (A334) and then turning left at the Titchfield Lane/Blind Lane traffic lights pass along Titchfield Lane from the North to the former Funtley Refuse Tip. This means 30-Ton HGV lorries will pass through Wickham and along Titchfield Lane - **every 8 minutes in a 12-hour work day for five years!**

Residents & users will know Titchfield Lane is a narrow and

busy country lane with low visibility bends, negligible verges, potholes, sinking drains, raised embankments and encroaching vegetation. Clearly too narrow for large HGVs to pass oncoming traffic safely not to mention passing cyclists and horse riders raising serious concerns about road user safety, environmental impact & disruption to residents.

The WRA reiterates we do not object to a Solar Farm and indeed welcome any community-led Solar Power Generation initiatives, especially with the current energy crisis - however, our concerns are the unnecessary landfill and as a consequence excessive HGV traffic & safety risks through Wickham and along Titchfield Lane.

WICKHAM RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (WRA)

The Wickham Residents Association is free to join, the only criterion being that you live in the PO17 postcode area. The Association is a collective voice for matters concerning Wickham residents - the more members the stronger & louder our voice! To join please contact Membership@WickhamResidents.org.uk or visit our website at <https://wickhamresidents.org.uk/>

SAVE THE DATE - WRA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Wickham Residents' Association will be holding its Annual General Meeting on the 4th of April 2023 in the Community Centre, Houghton Room from 7pm. Members are welcome, indeed encouraged to attend and the association will be circulating the agenda & further details nearer the time.

Wickham Youth Club Update.

We are saying farewell to the Youth Club Portacabins behind the Community Centre. These buildings have been here for nearly 15 years and will be disappearing soon, as they have come to the end of their lives.

Since Covid, the Club has not been able to reopen, due to the lack of volunteers to help the leader run the club safely, once a week for our 8- to 12-year-olds.

The cabins have sprung numerous leaks in the roof this winter and the estimates for repair were more than the cabins were worth, so the Youth Club Committee had the decision made for them to close down the club through a lack of volunteers and a leaky roof.

The committee wishes to thank and acknowledge the commitment given by volunteers over the many years since the club has been on the site of the Community Centre and especially to those folk who supported the 100 club and helped fund the Youth Club.

Our concern by closing down meant our young people had nothing to look forward to after school, but Mr Cutter-Headteacher at Wickham CofE Primary is hoping to trial a Youth Club on the school site and to provide a hot meal as well as lots of exciting activities after school once a week. The school minibus can be used to include members from Knowle.

Sue Roger-Jones.

On behalf of the

Youth Club Committee.
February 2023