

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. A report of the meeting was included in the February issue of the Parish Magazine. The next Forum meeting will be held on February 23rd, a few days after the March edition of the Magazine goes to press.

Since the January meeting of the Forum the WRA Committee, in association with Wickham Society and Knowle Residents' Association, has examined the top-level financial forecasts for a 3G football pitch produced in part by the Parish Council and developed further by the Forum Chairman. To test the validity of the forecasts, the WRA Committee has gathered evidence of pricing structures and levels of utilisation from venues around Hampshire that offer 3G football pitches for hire, with particular regard to data available regarding the 3G pitch at Swanmore School.

Additionally, the analysis takes into account the proposed provision of new 3G pitches in neighbouring Whiteley and Fareham (together some 7-10 pitches). When these are available, they will most likely be the preferred venues for teams from outside the Parish who are currently showing interest in using a possible 3G pitch at Mill Lane. WRA is currently trying to determine the likely timing of the availability of these pitches. From this base of evidence, refined models of utilisation and financial outcomes are being developed by the WRA Committee to assess the



potential viability of a 3G pitch at Mill Lane. This is vital work that the Forum needs to consider so that any proposals made by the Forum to the Parish Council are made in light of any financial risk that might be faced.

A 3G pitch at Mill Lane cannot be financially viable on the strength only of use by our Parish football team, Wickham Dynamos, and so in addition to the financial analysis undertaken by the Committee, a start has been made on forecasting the potential traffic impact on Mill Lane of a 3G pitch utilised by teams from outside the parish.

As reported in the February Magazine, the Parish Council has received a response from Winchester City Council to the pre-planning application that had been submitted. WRA has asked that the Forum be given sight of the pre-application and the Winchester response to be better informed about planning issues that need to be taken into account.

At the meeting of the Parish Recreation Committee on February 2nd, it was gratifying to hear the Chair of the Committee confirm that decisions regarding Mill Lane must be in the interests of residents and that when proposals are sufficiently well-

developed, residents will be consulted.

A proposal to appoint Fieldform as the contractor for the next stage of the planning process was approved at the February 2nd meeting.

WICKHAM RECREATION GROUND

At the Full Council meeting on January 26th, WRA stated that the planning approval for Wykeham included a sum of £150,000 to be provided for improvement to facilities at the Rec, citing specifically improvement to the changing facilities. This arrangement is also referenced in the current draft of the Winchester District Local Plan. The Clerk in response confirmed that this money has been paid and is held at Winchester. WRA is aware that the erection of any structure at the Recreation Ground has to receive the prior approval of the landowner, Rookesbury Estates, but is keen to know what is planned for utilising this money, especially as the changing facilities at the Rec are widely held to be unsatisfactory.

WELBORNE

Many residents of the parish will have visited the event held on February 8th and 9th to showcase the development at Welborne. Of prime interest for Wickham and Knowle are:

- the work to create the new junction from the M27 will be starting shortly and a timetable of closures of the current junction with the A32 has been published (go to <https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/transportchemes/m27junction10> for details)

- the first phase of residential development is expected to start before the end of 2023 and will comprise 800 houses and a primary school. These will be located on the north side of Knowle Road and are expected to be complete by the end of 2025
- planned health service establishments are included in the plan, but none are planned for the first phase. It is not yet clear where the Hants and Isle of Wight Integrated Health Board (successor to the Care Commissioning Group) intends patients in the first 800 houses to register for GP services. A Freedom of Information request has been submitted to the health Board by WRA to elicit the information, but despite protestations to the contrary that were accepted by Winchester Planning Committee when the Wickham Surgery expansion was approved, the obvious solution might be Wickham. Assuming 800 houses have an average occupancy of 3 per unit the number registering at Wickham would be around 2,400 – more than half the current population of Wickham and Knowle. Discussion with representatives of the Welborne developer, Buckland Estates, suggested that there is even doubt that the Health Board will support any of the planned health services in Welborne.
- There are two, possibly three, 3G full-sized football pitches planned for Welborne that will present competition for a 3G pitch at Mill Lane should one be supported by the Parish Council.

TITCHFIELD LANE - SOLAR FARM PROPOSAL

(application number 21/03089/HCS).

Following Hampshire County Council's public consultation which closed on 30th November 2022 with significant public objections recorded, the applicant NAVIGATE CORPORATION submitted further information from their consultant SLR, namely Titchfield Lane Traffic and Safety Risk Assessment by VECTOS.

The Traffic and Risk assessment has been circulated for further comment and the WRA carried out a detailed review of the VECTOS Traffic and Safety Risk Assessment report with the following summary of findings.

- The report identified Titchfield Lane has 21 unsafe traffic pinch points where an HGV lorry meeting an oncoming typical family car could not pass safely - indeed the report indicates these pinch points could result in vehicles clashing indicating how unsafe & unsuitable Titchfield Lane is for such HGV traffic.
- The report fails to survey and includes in the Traffic and Safety Risk Assessment the Titchfield Lane and A334 Winchester Road junction - a serious omission!
- Whilst VECTOS mentions potential mitigation measures these will involve substantial & costly changes to Titchfield Lane and would forever change the character & nature of this country lane. Also, such modifications would attract an increase in "rat-run traffic" to & from Wickham as a consequence - further adding to Wickham's traffic problems.
- Crucially, VECTOS is not an independent traffic safety consultant but is part of SLR

- the applicant's design consultants - clearly a serious conflict of interest. Hampshire Highways as part of the local planning authority normally requires such reports to be submitted by a completely independent traffic consultant that is not part of the applicant's design team and has no links to Hampshire Highways. This being the case Hampshire Highways should reject this report.

- Additionally, despite numerous requests, SLR has failed to explain and justify the need for 1.15m tonnes of waste and contrary to the local haulage company & SLR's assertions - NO WASTE will be coming from Welborne Housing development. This was confirmed during Welborne Development Open Day where Buckland Developments restated no waste will leave the site and all site traffic will travel to and from the South (M27) and not the North (Wickham).
- Further, as previously reported by the WRA - placing 1.15m tonnes of waste on top of the existing site cap (cap seals the existing waste) will jeopardise the integrity of the cap and is unnecessary to realise the solar farm development. Note, the previous application for this solar farm (WCC 19/01153/FUL) did not require any landfill and was approved by Winchester County Council.
- The argument that additional waste is required to build up the site for piling is flawed as WRA members' letter to Planning on 30th Nov 2022 demonstrates that piling on freshly filled land could endanger the cap as piles are 2.5 metres long and piled

into soft earth can pierce the capping. Surface mounting of the solar panel is the preferred method as proposed in the previous application. Finally, the WRA has concerns that the applicant NAVIGATE CORPORATION, registered in the British Virgin Islands, has no proven experience or track record in developing and importantly delivering such Solar Farm installations.

For the avoidance of doubt, the WRA does not object to a Solar Farm per se and indeed welcomes any community-led Solar Power Generation initiatives, especially within the context of the current energy crisis - however, our concerns are and remain the unnecessary landfill and as a consequence excessive HGV

traffic & safety risks along Titchfield Lane and through Wickham.

PARISH ELECTIONS - THURSDAY 4 MAY 2023

Do you live in Wickham and Knowle? Do you have time to help make a difference in the lives of local people by becoming a parish councillor? Eleven seats are up for election in May 2023.

Information on how to stand can be found on this link <https://www.winchester.gov.uk/elections/standing-as-a-candidate-district-parish-elections-4-may-2023>.

WICKHAM RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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/>

4TH APRIL 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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

Jane Hall Artist



You may be surprised how many talented artists live in Wickham. Here is Jane Hall pictured in her studio. She enjoys painting in oils and specialises in painting family pets but she would be pleased to take commissions for any subject. You can contact her by email on jllrainbow@btinternet.com