

Comments made by Wendy Greenish on behalf of Wickham Society at the Welborne planning meeting at FBC held in October 2019

Key issues for Wickham Residents:

Although the outline planning application has given significant consideration to the layout of the roads within the development and the reconfiguration of Exit 10 on the M27, we are concerned that there is insufficient thought about the impact of the increased traffic on the historical village of Wickham and surrounding areas.

The adverse impact of reconfiguring the roundabout at the southern entry to Wickham this year has highlighted the increasing amount of traffic that uses the A32 and A334. The long queues belching exhaust fumes into the atmosphere have been an unpleasant aspect of life in Wickham this summer. As a consequence, further consideration needs to be taken about the effect that a further 6000 houses and thus at least 9000 vehicles will have on a daily basis on the roads in the surrounding area – particularly to the north and south of the new development. There will need to be significant further investment in road infrastructure and public transport, not only in Welborne but the surrounding area. We urge all relevant agencies to work together to find ways of mitigating the huge impact that this development will ultimately have on the existing road networks and infrastructure. We welcome the proposal to include a railway halt within the development and really hope that funding will be found to enable this to become a reality as soon as possible. It will be a benefit to many people in the area as a means of reducing road journeys.

We object to any suggestion that primary care facilities are not needed to be located in Welborne. To be designated as a Garden Village, as Welborne aspires to be, requires evidence of self-sufficiency and access to primary care is one of those facilities that needs to be included within the site. We understand that it is the Clinical Commissioning Group who are resisting this requirement. A way must be found that will meet quality and governance concerns of the CCG while enabling primary care provision within Welborne. Medical and primary educational capacity in Wickham is limited, particularly as the village will be trying to absorb the outcome of increasing its own housing stock by 200 plus units within the next decade. Both facilities are to the north of the village thus requiring journeys through the medieval parts of Wickham from Welborne. These journeys should not be necessary for residents from a development the size of Welborne.

This development will take place not just during a period of months or years, but decades. For centuries, residents of Wickham have been able to travel between Wickham and Fareham with a vista of rolling fields and hedgerows – always an uplifting sight. We recognise that we will lose this view but appeal to planners to ensure the early provision within the development of the site for the planting of trees and landscaping alongside the A32, to prevent the building site from being an eyesore for years to come and to assist in retaining a rural rather than suburban setting.

Key issues for Knowle residents:

Knowle Village is unusual in that it has only one road of entry and exit and this road will go right through the middle of Welborne. It is therefore vitally important that this community of over 800 residences continues to have unfettered access to the A32 along the Knowle Road. As Welborne develops, care must be taken by the builders to ensure that this road is not blocked or damaged in any way that prevents vehicle access throughout the building programme.

Knowle Road was planted with native trees and hedgerows with great care at the beginning of this century to create a rural entry road to the village. We object to any changes to this landscape and would support all efforts to retain as much of the existing planting for as long as possible – again it will act as a screen from the eyesore of buildings in development, and will be a vital element for the well-being of Knowle village residents going forward.

As we are sure you will appreciate, residents in Wickham and Knowle can only view such a large development as Welborne, so close to the parish boundary, with apprehension. Wickham has evolved over many centuries and is a unique community of historic significance that we cherish and are anxious to protect for future generations. Knowle is a relatively new community and residents greatly value its rural location which is now under threat.

We reluctantly accept that Welborne is to be built in order to contribute to the required housing stock in the area. We believe that the leaders of Buckland Development Ltd are willing to take a responsible approach to the significant impact of this new community and that they wish to bring positive benefits to those who will live there and in the surrounding area. However, we hope you will take these issues into account as you review this planning application.