

Keep Wickwar a Village

Notes of the 2nd Public Wickwar Action Group on the 16th November 2017

A second public Wickwar action group took place in the Wickwar Village Hall from 7pm to 9pm. The first meeting attended by 45 parishioners formulated a plan of action to engage with South Gloucestershire Planning Committee and to inform and gain support from parishioners unaware of the negative impact of the proposed 90 home residential development planning application by Gladman Developments.

This second meeting was attended by 75 parishioners and was facilitated by Pat Trull (Wickwar Parish Clerk) and Colin Maidment (Wickwar Parish Councillor).

The aim of the meeting was to make people aware of the concerns on the development such as the lack of supporting infrastructure such as (roads, schools, public transport, shops and amenities) and the fact that Wickwar is not identified in the agreed West of England Joint Spatial Plan which identifies suitable and sustainable development sites.

Apologies from both Luke Hall MP and Marian Lewis were communicated to the audience due to other work commitments. Both identified that they would not be supporting the application and taking their own action in raising their concerns with Councillors and Council Leadership.

During the meeting there was a lot of discussion on how to make an objection which would have the biggest impact and discussions of generic areas of concern to use was communicated. With the quality of the objection being just as important as the number of objections received.

Parishioners Concerns/Issues

- A parishioner felt that Wickwar is considered a prime development area and that the council appeared not to be concerned about the increasing traffic problem through the village.
- It was also raised that based on the 2011 census the new developments would add 23% housing population to the village without any agreed supporting infrastructure to accommodate this change.
- The West of England Spatial Plan 2022-2036 does not identify Wickwar as a growth location.
- The provision of a by pass to take traffic away from Wickwar was discussed as it was considered 50 years ago but not built. There were both positive and negative responses to this option by the parishioners at the meeting.
- The calculation of road congestion used by the developer to support his application is based on 2011 and needs to be updated to take into account current levels.
- The provision of affordable housing was discussed with the proposal stating up to 32 units. So this may be just 1. A further question was asked : what are the figures used for affordability?
- As Wickwar is in a conservation zone can this be extended out to the land that the proposed development is targeting as a village green? Which if designated as such could not be built on.

- The increase of traffic not only from the proposed development but due to the increase of traffic from both North and South through Wickwar will cause problems to the population due to car emissions.
- Concern that any 106 money to provide infrastructure may be indicated at the start of the development planning process but by the time the development is built this money is not forthcoming as it does not appear to be a binding commitment.

Follow on actions

1. In order to raise the concerns outside the planning arena individual parishioners have the recourse to raise them with Luke Hall or Marian Lewis as their elected representative.
2. There is now a five page document entitled “keep Wickwar a Village” which communicates the concerns parishioners have and frequently asked questions and how to make to make their voice heard. Copies of this document were produced and these would be delivered to each house in Wickwar over the following week.
3. Smaller posters are to be developed for display in parishioners’ windows and two banners will be purchased paid for by a benefactor in the village and displayed.
4. Individuals to formulate their objections and input them on the planning web site and to talk to their neighbours and friends in the village to communicate the raised concerns.

The meeting ended at 9 pm with agreement that a follow on progress meeting will take place at the Wickwar Village Hall on the 23rd November 7 pm.