

WICKHAM MARKET NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Helicopter View of Local Responses to Consultation

Introduction

All comments made in response to questions asked during the consultation were recorded and assigned to types of issues as indicated by the responses. The consultation produced 110 sets of feedback and these were added to similar sets of feedback from the recent Parish Plan to give an overall indication of what people regard as important local issues. We then divided all the comments into Strategic Issues and Detail Issues (the number of comments are shown in brackets).

1 Housing (1)

- 1.1 Type (35)
- 1.2 Number of new houses (9)
- 1.3 Location of new houses (20)
- 1.4 Affordable housing (18)

Total: 83

2 Traffic and pedestrians, including cycling (10)

- 2.1 speeding and traffic calming (24)
- 2.2 parking (44)
- 2.3 traffic flow (15)
- 2.4 volume (1)
- 2.5 pollution
- 2.6 pavements – safety and condition (29)
- 2.7 crossings (5)
- 2.8 cycling (5)

Total: 133

3 Leisure, learning and recreation (22)

- 3.1 children
- 3.2 play area (18)
- 3.3 meeting places
- 3.4 youth facilities (18)
- 3.5 sports facilities for all ages (20)
- 3.6 allotments
- 3.7 learning/training (3)

Total: 81

4 Quality of public areas (2)

- 4.1 anti-social activity eg dog fouling, litter
- 4.2 hedge cutting
- 4.3 footpaths (5)

Total: 7

5 Village character (7)

- 5.1 listed buildings (2)
- 5.2 conservation area (2)
- 5.3 square (2)
- 5.4 pyghtle (2)
- 5.5 views (4)

Total: 19

6 Landscape and environment

fields, footpaths, drainage, flooding, lanes, trees (50)

Total: 50

7 Village services (8)

- 7.1 shops, health centre, school, public transport (35)
- 7.2 pub (37)
- 7.3 restaurant (2)

Total: 82

8 Business needs

- 8.1 mobile coverage (4)
- 8.2 internet speed (5)
- 8.3 other (7)

Total: 16

[What does this tell us?](#)

That respondees were more prompted to comment on traffic and the pedestrian experience than any other issue. Housing, leisure and village services prompted a similar number of comments (c80 each). Landscape and environment issues attracted 50 comments. The respondees had less to say about the quality of public areas and the village character but that is likely to indicate contentment rather than stress: they were asked what *improvements* could be made to the village. Business needs attracted little comment but the number of interested parties (traders who mostly live outside the village) is small and therefore unlikely to make any large impact on the whole survey.

[What was the issue that attracted most negative comments and why?](#)

The Big Issues were traffic and parking: 133 comments were about traffic and pedestrians a third of these concerned parking and nearly 20% each were related to speeding and traffic calming and the safety and condition of pavements.

Traffic and pedestrians: Comments indicate that traffic calming, speed enforcement and speed limit reduction are needed to safeguard pedestrians in the centre and outskirts of the village. The most popular suggestion was to reduce the speed limit to 20mph through the centre. Other suggestions included:

- extending the 30mph limit along the approach roads to WM;
- pedestrianising the square,
- an illuminated 30mph sign near the cemetery

- traffic management on all narrow roads and from Border Cott Lane to the Hill.
- A one-way system or prioritising traffic at narrow points.

Parking raised the most comments of any issue. The problems stated relate to insufficient public parking in the centre, cars parked on pavements and cars parked both sides of the road in Lower High Street and near Border Cott Lane. One suggestion was to provide off-street parking for the residents in this area. Many of the comments relate to imposing traffic management on the roads leading to the centre, and in particular the High Street, because of the lack of parking restrictions and 'pinch' points. It was also noted that more parking for the disabled was required and that any new housing should have off-street and adequate parking. Suggestions included:

- free car parking
- ban parking in High Street
- more parking bays for housing developments (Yew Tree Rise)
- parking for tennis courts and sports field
- enlarge village hall car park and do not restrict use
- enforcement of existing restrictions
- join village hall car park and the one behind Crafers

The third most commented on problem was the condition and width of pavements. There are said to be too few dropped kerbs for pushchairs and wheelchairs, the pavements are too narrow at the 'pinch' points and crossings are also needed at those places. One suggestion was that the roads are raised to pavement level at crossings. Unsafe places for pedestrians included:

- Dallinghoo Road near the school and new housing because of narrow pavements
- Chapel Lane, the Post Office and the Co-op

There were 5 comments about cycling which included: creating cycle lanes on the village roads and riverside, a cycle path to the station and cycle racks on the Hill.

Housing: Some respondees were adamant that new development was not wanted but overall there was support for some new housing in small pockets but only if it were of the type deemed to be needed:

- energy efficient
- with adequate parking
- infill where possible or on the outskirts
- small scale
- small housing: for downsizers and starters
- affordable/shared ownership
- suited to the over 55s.

There was no common view on where the housing should be located other than it should be infill where possible or otherwise small development on the fringe of the village which would not have significant impact on roads or landscape. Suggested locations included: extension of Wickham Place and land behind Deben Court.

Village services:

Poor public transport was mentioned by 16 respondees and was an issue raised in the Parish Plan comments. The issue seems to be largely about lack of frequency of buses (17). There were requests for a greengrocer in the village and a large number of pleas (37) for a family-friendly pub although respondees do not necessarily see this as the George; that said they want the George building to be 'sorted out'.

Leisure, learning and recreation: attracted a significant number of comments (81). The majority of these concerned facilities for children and teenagers. There is general agreement that a priority should be to upgrade both play areas. Respondees suggest that something is needed – sheltered space and activities - specifically for youth but ideas are few: a youth club and designated space with Wifi were the suggestions. There were a few references to replacing or improving the village hall but the focus was more on activities for all age groups:

- a social club for the elderly
- combining football teams and providing an all-weather pitch with floodlights
- indoor badminton court
- a swimming pool and gym
- art, craft and IT workshops and evening classes

Several respondees suggested that more effort is made to encourage walkers, cyclists and tourists by:

- making the Hill a green space with seating
- making maps for walks freely available
- providing more B&B accommodation
- use existing football field as a community green space.

Landscape and environment: In total there were 50 comments concerning the landscape and environment and 19 on what can be described as the village 'character'. Respondees were overwhelmingly in favour of retaining existing green spaces of all types, retaining existing views particularly of the church and improving maintenance of hedges, ditches and the riverside. Respondees agreed that more wildlife habitats and trees would be welcomed, that trees should screen new development and that the Pyghtle and new green spaces within the village should provide seating and social places for people to rest and meet. One suggestion was for a community orchard and several were for a village pond to be created. Other suggestions were:

- remove overhead pylons particularly near Deben Mill
- plaques on buildings to show history
- expand conservation area
- pedestrianise northern side of square.

Public areas: There were relatively few comments about the quality of Wickham's public areas but dog fouling and maintenance of – and an increase in footpaths and bridleways are considered to be issues to be tackled.

Business: Improvements requested were better broadband speed and mobile phone coverage and making the village more attractive to passing trade.

Conclusion

Overall the survey revealed some specific problems around traffic and pedestrian safety but these are not, on the whole, related to more housing development; the problems exist now and are only likely to be exacerbated by more housing rather than caused by it. The most problematic issues concern parking and traffic speed.

That said, there are some very clear messages about any new housing developments and these are that the housing should meet existing needs (not simply bring more people into the village) and that it should be suitable for young families and older downsizers. The comments about energy efficiency suggest that there is a desire for modern eco-housing rather than traditional build.

Respondee are clear that they do not want the landscape and visual quality of the village to change: infill housing or small scale development on the outskirts of the settlement are preferred. There is also a strong theme running through the responses which suggests that existing views must be protected and green spaces improved and expanded to include seating and meeting places. More leisure and sporting facilities for all ages are requested but the over-riding issue was to improve the play areas.

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