



# **Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement**

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1. To complete this consultation statement many references have been used. Most of the content of these references has not been copied into this document. These references are either freely available on the web or can be found on the Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan website. The references used are identified by a number in brackets in the text and all the references are listed at the end of this document where a hypertext link will take you to the reference concerned.
2. Wickham Market Parish Council (WMPC) decided to write a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) in June 2015. All the neighbouring parishes, Pettistree, Letheringham, Hacheston, Campsea Ashe and Dallinghoo, along with Easton, were asked if they wished to join us, but all declined. Consequently, on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015 WMPC formally applied to Suffolk Coastal District Council (SCDC)<sup>1</sup> to write a NP for the Wickham Market Parish alone. On 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016 SCDC approved the designation of the Neighbourhood Area for Wickham Market Parish as the parish boundary (1). In order to gain approval SCDC had approached all statutory bodies and all the neighbouring parish councils and also published the application on their web site. In addition, WMPC publicised the application widely within the parish (2). Comments were received from Suffolk County Council (SCC). Historic England, Natural England, one landowner, one estate agent on behalf of a landowner and a developer.
3. SCC gave information on who to contact for help and advice on different aspects and the statutory bodies stated what they would expect to see in the NP from their perspective. Historic England and Natural England gave their guidance as to what they would expect to be considered. It should be noted that there were no adverse comments.
4. WMPC set up the Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan (WMNP) Committee to take forward this initiative and this committee met every second Tuesday of the month in the Resource Centre, Wickham Market, until February 2020. These meetings have all been open to the public in accordance with the government rules for Parish Council Committee meetings. In retrospect it would have been much better if a Working Group had been set up to carry out this work. There was a slight pause in meetings when the first COVID-19 lockdown happened in March 2020 and since August 2020 meetings have been conducted virtually by Zoom. It was decided that the NP should cover the period 2018 – 2036.
5. Various methods of consultation have been used. Residents were informed of the launch of the Neighbourhood Plan by a flyer which was distributed to all households, this was reinforced by information stalls at the local market and local fetes. A comprehensive web site was set up, <https://www.wickhammarketnp.org/> where news, minutes and key documents are displayed.

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<sup>1</sup> Now East Suffolk Council

6. Four well-advertised Open Days have been held and information regarding the NP has been circulated by the village round-robin email (Wickham News) and the Parish Magazine. In addition, the website is regularly updated.
7. Funding was approved by “Locality” on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016 and, as it was intended that the WMNP would include more housing than allocated in the Local Plan<sup>2</sup>, the NP was considered to be complex. Consequently, in addition to the normal funding we were granted the ability to have several technical reports completed and these would be funded by Locality.
8. On 15th May 2016 WMPC held the first NP Open Day explaining what was hoped to be achieved from the NP. The NP Chairman gave a briefing explaining the need for the NP (3). Prior to this open day a fold up leaflet and questionnaire had been produced (4) and circulated to all households asking for residents’ views. This questionnaire explained the process and asked some searching questions under the following headings, Social and Community, Environment and Heritage and Economic and Infrastructure. Just over 1000 leaflets were distributed, one to each household in the Parish, and 113 were returned with comments on the various topics. Views were consistent with those expressed earlier in the development of the Wickham Market Parish Plan. A summary of the numbers of comments on each topic and sub-topic was then collated (5). An overview of the numbers of comments received on each topic is:
  - a) Housing. (83 comments)
  - b) Traffic and pedestrians, including cycling. (133 comments)
  - c) Leisure, learning and recreation. (81 comments)
  - d) Quality of public areas. (7 comments)
  - e) Village character. (19 comments)
  - f) Landscape and environment fields, footpaths, drainage, flooding, lanes, trees. (50 comments)
  - g) Shops, health centre, school, public transport. (82 comments)
  - h) Business needs. (16 comments)
 This feedback gave a good indication of the issues that concerned Wickham Market residents.
9. With the information gleaned from the leaflets WMNP Committee prepared a vision (6) which was presented to the village at a second Open Day on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2016 where comments were invited. The presentation slides from this Open Day can be found at (7).
10. This vision was well received by the majority with most of the comments relating to traffic and parking.
11. At this time SCDC Local Plan, 2010 – 2027, was in final draft and Wickham Market had no housing allocation as 115 houses had been built in the village in in the period 2010 – 2014. As the WMNP period extended some 9 years beyond the SCDC Local Plan period it was felt that Wickham Market should be able to accept some more housing. In order to define the requirement AECOM were commissioned to write a Housing Needs

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<sup>2</sup> SCDC Local Plan - Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies adopted 26 January 2017

Assessment (8). On completion of this document AECOM were then commissioned to write a Heritage and Character Assessment (9). Whilst this document covered the area within the Wickham Market settlement boundary very well, information regarding the remainder of the parish was not sufficient. Consequently, a Landscape Appraisal was commissioned which was issued in 3 parts (10), (11), (12). Finally, AECOM were commissioned to write a Site Assessment report looking at all the parcels of land within the parish boundary which were surrounding the Wickham Market settlement boundary (13).

12. With the information gleaned the WMNP Committee drafted a number of proposals which were shown to the village at the third NP Open Day on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2018 and comments were invited. The slides shown at this Open Day can be seen at (14). The proposals were:

- a) Old School Farm Development
- b) Simon's Cross Development with allotment re-provision
- c) Proposed Business Development Site
- d) Proposed New Car Park
- e) Non-Designated Heritage Assets
- f) Areas to be protected from Development
- g) District Centre boundary extension
- h) Conservation Area Boundary extension
- i) Pump Track
- j) Local Green Space

13. Over 100 comments were received from residents which in the main were very positive. A summary of the main comments is as follows:

- a) The landowner of the proposed business development site was not prepared to make this land available for this use, so this proposal was dropped.
- b) Concerns were aired regarding the access to the proposed car park so alternative sites were considered. No other suitable site was found, but ways to improve highway access were considered and it was hoped that a solution had been found.
- c) Comments regarding the Non-Designated Heritage Assets were very positive and two additional assets were suggested, these are now included.
- d) Following discussion with SCDC it showed that our suggestion for including gardens within the Conservation Area as "Areas to be Protected from Development" was unworkable so a new policy "Preserving and Enhancing Green Spaces in Wickham Market Conservation Area" was drafted and it is hoped that this policy will have a similar effect.
- e) There was not much public support for increasing the boundary of the District Centre, but from the comments received, it was clear that the WMNP Committee had not made clear why this was necessary. WMPC tried to get this change adopted as part of the Local Plan review, but whilst SCDC (Now East Suffolk Council (ESC)) had no objections to the request the change was not implemented in the latest Local Plan (15).

- f) The Wickham Market Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) (16) is the responsibility of ESC. When this document is being reviewed WMPC will ensure that the proposal to enlarge the CAA to incorporate Deben Court, the old workhouse, will be suggested.
  - g) There were mainly negative comments concerning the proposal to create a Pump Track and hence this proposal was dropped.
  - h) Finally, all of the areas of Local Green Space were reviewed in line with the Nation Planning Policy Framework (17) guidance, and this led to a number of areas being removed from the list.
14. At this stage a NP consultant, Navigus Planning was engaged, and the pre-submission Regulation 14 version of the NP was drafted.
  15. The plan was then submitted to East Suffolk Council for an informal check and some further amendments made.
  16. The NP was also submitted to AECOM who completed a Neighbourhood Plan Health Check (18). The comments raised by the health check were reviewed and incorporated into the next version of the NP.
  17. The Regulation 14 version of the Plan (19) was issued for comment to all consultees (22) and published on the web site on 18 February 2019 with request for comments by 1 April 2019.
  18. On 19 February 2019 the fourth NP Open Day was held in the village hall. The Open Day was advertised by a leaflet drop, posters, Wickham News, the NP and Parish Council websites, email and word of mouth. The aim of the Open Day was to inform residents of the content of the Regulation 14 version of the NP and ask for formal feedback. The Open Day consisted of A2 posters showing all of the policies along with copies the NP and all supporting documentation. NP Committee members were on hand to answer any queries. It was attended by 92 people.
  19. Following the Open Day, the display material used was put on display in the atrium of the Wickham Market Resource Centre/Library and copies of the NP and key documents were also made available.
  20. A total of 64 comments were received, each comment was considered and how it was to be addressed. A spreadsheet (20) was compiled which contains all the comments how each one was addressed. The main changes that were made to the plan were:
    - a) Table 3.1 showing the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives was split into two parts. Those that could be achieved through policies in the NP were titled Neighbourhood Plan Objectives and those which would have to be completed by the community were called Community Objectives.
    - b) Criterion B was removed from Policy WICK3 as it placed an action on neighbouring parishes to show how any development would protect the key views of Wickham

Market. The NP is not allowed comment on development outside the Parish boundary.

- c) In WICK6 the Penny Field was removed as a Local Green Space as it did not comply with the NPPF guidance, and it was requested by the Landowner.
  - d) In WICK7 criterion B was removed as this is covered by the CAA, and it was thought that it gave the impression that development might be supported in gardens in the Conservation Area, and this is not the case.
  - e) In the Transport and Movement section paragraphs regarding Public Transport and On-Street Parking have been inserted.
  - f) In WICK9 the policy relating to the new car park was removed. At the time it was removed due to the adverse comments recorded. However, ESC has now changed their car park pricing policy which has removed the requirement.
  - g) Following on from the work conducted by the WMPC Traffic and Transport Working Group, a paragraph has been added listing suggested road layout modifications which would improve pedestrian and traffic safety.
  - h) The Landowner of the Old School Farm site (WICK12) stated that this land was no longer available for development. This was because ESC had included in their Local Plan a development for 150 houses on his land in the neighbouring parish of Pettistree, but within the settlement boundary of Wickham Market. After discussion it was agreed that the land was still available for development and should be included in the NP. Unfortunately, the Landowner then passed away which resulted in further discussion with the eventual decision that the development should remain in the NP.
  - i) The Landowner for the Simon's Cross development (WICK13) stated that he would prefer to access the site from a different location. After significant discussion both access points have been included as possibilities in the NP. However, provisional designs for the development show that the original access suggested has been the one to be adopted.
  - j) WICK14 is the policy for the new Simon's Cross allotments. The movement of the allotments were a prerequisite to enable the development of the old Simon's Cross allotment site. The new site was granted planning permission and the allotments have now moved to the new site.
  - k) The George Public House project and the boundary change for the Conservation Area have been added to the list of Community Actions shown in Table 9.1
21. The ESC review of car parking charges has had a significant effect on the village and has had an impact on the NP. It was implemented in April 2020. Now all business parking has migrated to the Village Hall car park which means the Percy Mason long stay car park is virtually empty thus removing the requirement for a long stay car park in the NP. The full impact of these changes has not yet been felt due the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Village Hall has been closed, when the Village Hall reopens bonafide users will find it exceedingly difficult to find a parking space.
22. Between July and December 2018, the landowner of Jubilee and Low Farm fields offered these fields to ESC for future development. These fields are at the north of Wickham Market between the B1078 and the River Deben. The date has been deduced as the site is not shown as available in the Strategic Housing and Economic Availability Assessment

(SHELAA) dated Jul 18, but they are shown in the SHELAA dated Dec 18. No comment from the landowner or his agent was received in response to the Regulation 14 consultation. In Sep 2020 the Parish Council were asked to consider including these fields within the NP. The Parish Council considered this request at the PC meeting on 21 Sep 2020 under Item 11.2 (21) and decided that this land could not be considered in the NP at this stage. The landowner's agent was informed by letter on 5 Oct 2020.

23. The Wickham Market Traffic and Parking WG set out to update the Wickham Market Traffic paper (23) in 2018. The revision, when produced, was never endorsed by the PC. However, the work undertaken in compiling this update was used in the PC's discussion with EDF concerning the impact of significant additional traffic coming through Wickham Market during the construction period of Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station. This led to the list of suggested improvements shown at para 7.14 in the NP (24)
24. A planning application to relocate the Simons Cross Allotments, as detailed in WICK14 in the Regulation 14 Version of the NP, was approved by ESC on 28 Feb 2019 and the allotments have now moved. As this policy has now been implemented there is no longer any requirement to retain it within the NP and it has been removed.
25. A detailed timeline of the key events is shown on the NP website (25).

RJ Jenkinson  
Chairman  
Wickham Market Neighbourhood Plan Committee

## References.

1. [SCDC Decision Notice Wickham Market NP Area \(Jan 2016\)](#)
2. [NP Leaflet \(Dec 2015\)](#)
3. [Neighbourhood Plan Briefing Open Meeting \(May 2016\)](#)
4. [Neighbourhood Plan leaflet and questionnaire \(July 2016\)](#)
5. [Questionnaire Results - 'helicopter view' \(Oct 2016\)](#)
6. [Draft Vision leaflet \(Oct 2016\)](#)
7. [Open Meeting Nov 6th, 2016, presentation slides](#)
8. [Housing Needs Assessment \(Mar 2017\)](#)
9. [Heritage and Character Assessment \(Feb 2018\)](#)
10. [Landscape Character Assessment Part 1 \(April 2018\)](#)
11. [Landscape Character Assessment Part 2 • Key Views \(Apr 2018\)](#)
12. [Landscape Character Assessment Part 3 • Sensitivity Assessment \(April 2018\)](#)
13. [Site Assessment Report \(Feb 2018\)](#)
14. [Open Day 18th Mar, 2018 - presentation slides](#)
15. [Suffolk Coastal Local Plan - adopted on 23 Sep 2020](#)
16. [Wickham Market Conservation Area Appraisal - Mar 2016](#)
17. [National Planning Policy Framework](#)
18. [Wickham Market NP Health Check - 27 Mar 2019](#)
19. [Regulation 14 version of the Wickham Market NP - 18 Feb 2019](#)
20. [Summary of Reg 14 Responses – 20 May 2021](#)
21. [WMPC Minutes of meeting held on 21 Sep 2020](#)
22. [Regulation 14 List of Consultees Feb 2019](#)
23. [Wickham Market Traffic and Parking Report dated Nov 2014](#)
24. [Reg15 Version of the NP Oct 2021](#)
25. [NP Timeline Oct 2021](#)