

From: Henry Cleary, Chair, Welborne Standing Conference

To: Councillor Sean Woodward, Leader, Fareham Borough Council

9 June 2013

Dear Councillor Woodward,

Standing Conference response to the draft Welborne Plan consultation

I am pleased to send you this response to the consultation on the Welborne Plan.

1. Summary The Standing Conference welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Welborne Plan. While recognising that further work is underway and that planning requires some policies to be expressed in general terms, many members still have concerns about the lack of detail on some topics and the consequent difficulty in visualising and understanding the nature of the development likely to come forward. Nevertheless there is broad **support** for the high level development principles underlying the plan and particularly the commitments on masterplanning, design, green infrastructure and for the range of community services which the plan provides for. Major **questions and concerns** remain on a number of areas: how transport policies will be implemented, on environmental infrastructure, and whether the site can accommodate 6,500 homes at an acceptable density of development. In 4 areas the Standing Conference is looking for **revision** of the policies: (i) introduction of trigger points to allow *flexibility in the plan* over its 25 year life in areas such as make up of employment space, types of housing, and environmental standards; (ii) a *stronger retail provision in the Welborne district centre* to enable it to be the first choice for residents for day to day needs; (iii) *Location of the first primary and secondary school at the heart of the Welborne development close to the district centre* to promote community building, shared use of facilities and sustainable travel with the site east of A32 being used if necessary at a later date; (iv) *green buffer (with neighbouring communities) policies to be strengthened*, including by requiring a low density development zone in the area adjoining the green buffer.

2. Status of this document The Welborne Standing Conference is made up of local and community representatives, and partner organisations with an interest in delivery of the new community north of Fareham, now known as Welborne. It acts as a sounding board and external adviser to Fareham Borough Council on key issues on development and delivery and is keen to use the opportunity of this consultation to present a view from across its diverse membership, recognising that most members will also be commenting individually. The views that follow do not represent a definitive position for any individual organisation but reflect the broad thrust of discussion in a special workshop to prepare this response together with comments received on the draft and made separately by those unable to attend.

3. **Process** The Standing Conference has considered the policies in the draft Welborne Plan (see summary list annexed to this note) as well as other material on the Fareham Borough Council website, previous Standing Conference notes and through members' visits to the Council's exhibition and consultation events. We have grouped our views in 3 ways:

- Those parts of the plan where we **support** the principles and policies identified;
- Topics where we have **questions and concerns** which need further attention;
- Particular policies on which we **disagree and are looking for a revision**.

4. The Standing Conference recognises that **further work** on the plan is on-going in several areas such as transport, infrastructure delivery, the concept masterplan and viability and looks forward to contributing further to the development of thinking through its regular meetings and workshops. However as this is the main formal opportunity to contribute its views the Standing Conference is keen to take it and comment on the plan as it stands.

5. **Concern on lack of detail** Before commenting on individual policies it is necessary to reflect the major concern and difficulty which many members of the Standing Conference, and particularly local and community groups, expressed at the fact that, notwithstanding the illustrations and diagrams used in the consultation materials, in many areas the plan sets broad policies with little detail. This means that it is extremely difficult to visualise or quantify what might be expected to result or what will be the specific impacts on local areas and features. In part this is a frustration with the nature of the planning system but there are ways to create greater confidence in what is actually likely to come forward. Partly this can come through using illustrative models of how similar development has been done elsewhere (for example the types of local road improvement that may be needed). In addition there is a major need for the parties who will bring forward the development to prepare and make available, separately from this plan and outside the constraints of a planning document, statements about the development and infrastructure they expect to be provided and how and who will deliver it at least for the first phase of this major scheme. While this may be dependent on further work it is a key part of convincing local partners that the development will be of the necessary quality and avoid unacceptable impacts on existing communities.

Areas of support

6. There is broad support for the *high level development principles set out in WEL 1 and 2 including the approach to sustainable design, commitment to biodiversity and green infrastructure, and commitment to a strong urban form*.

7. There is also broad support for the *commitment to masterplanning, the Design principles and the requirement for a Strategic Design Code* (to be prepared by

Fareham Borough Council) (WEL 4,6,7,8) which developers will be required to follow and to submit a design statement with each phase.

8. The *commitment to green infrastructure and bio-diversity* and related policies in WEL 25 – 29 is welcomed subject to there being clarity on whether space is primarily allocated to recreation and access or biodiversity (where access may need to be restricted). There also needs to be greater clarity on exactly what the long distance green routes will be, how they link beyond the new community boundary (for example impact on neighbouring communities) and that as in the case of Mayle's Lane they don't result in new routes for motorised traffic.

9. The *provision for a policing hub and other community services as part of the district centre* is welcomed, particularly the emphasis on shared use of facilities. The policy could go further and require development proposals to *give active support to existing voluntary and third sector groups who are prepared to help manage such facilities* including provision of a "Welcome to the new community" service. History has shown that this can be invaluable in helping new arrivals to become active makers of the new community.

Areas of major question and concern

10. There is a major set of questions around the provision of infrastructure for the new community of which the most significant is on *transport*. While accepting that high level modelling has been completed, and that further more detailed modelling is underway, there is a concern on *how traffic will be handled along the A32* which will bear the brunt of the impact of the development and on the *impact of Jc 10 changes*.

11. In particular there is a concern around *the local road improvement measures listed in WEL 17* – what impact these will have on adjoining homes eg loss of homes, gardens, impact on movement for existing residents and whether they will be effective. Similarly what will be the impact on the A32 (and other roads) further north eg in Wickham.

12. There is also a concern about public transport and sustainable travel – what will the actual *BRT routes* be. Is there sufficient allowance in design to get prioritised/separate bus routes through the new development and will they require subsidy. Will BRT and smarter choices be sufficient to keep traffic impacts on the A32 and surrounding network at an acceptable level. These uncertainties make it difficult to judge whether the policies in WEL16-20 will be sufficient.

13. There is a similar concern on *environmental infrastructure*. There are strong local concerns on any development that could exacerbate flood risk and while the policy requires no net run off and use of SUDS, other aspects are still to be proven – particularly the highly ambitious black water recycling.

14. There is a concern that the detailed *planning for the district centre and its location* must ensure that it works well as the central hub of the new community, with

attractive green routes and streets radiating from it. It is recognised that it needs to be close to the A32 but not at the expense of its community role.

15. While some aspects of policy on *housing* – such as pepperpotting of affordable housing – are welcomed, this also an area where lack of supporting evidence on delivery make it difficult to judge whether the policies (WEL 21-4) are right. For example how will the private rented stock be provided and managed. There is a wider point on flexibility – see below.

16. Another major concern is on *the tension in the plan between the traditional concept of Garden City, and its relatively low densities, and the volume of housing* – 6,500 to fit on this site. The envisaged density range is considerable – around 24 to over 40 and members find it difficult to visualise what this will actually create. Many members would like to see a reduction in total numbers – or at least a holding back above a certain level until there is greater assurance that the scale of development is acceptable.

17. There are also several areas where members would wish to see more explicit requirements and more specific policies – the requirement for *a minimum of infrastructure to be in place before the first house is constructed*, an effective plan for handling *construction traffic* while development is under way, and greater recognition in the plan policies of the impact of *motorway noise* on areas of development and how that will be mitigated.

Areas of disagreement

18. There are 4 issues where members have a significant disagreement with the published plan and are looking to see a **revision** in the plan when it is submitted later this year for formal examination.

19. **Greater Flexibility** There is a general concern that the plan is insufficiently flexible to cater for 25 years of development in a rapidly changing world. While it is likely to be necessary to give specific commitments for the first (and possibly second) phase, there should be a willingness to review key parameters at specific trigger points later in the period. This should cover issues such as the make up of the employment space uses, the type of housing, the environmental standards (including energy and water conservation) to be achieved - higher performance may well be possible at reasonable cost - and the use of reserve sites. On the latter there is concern that more needs to be done at this stage to identify parcels of land which should be put aside now in key locations such as the district centre and schools to allow for future expansion.

20. **The District Centre** The stated aim of the plan is to “to encourage self containment with a significant proportion of its inhabitants’ life needs being accessible within a main centre and smaller neighbourhood centres.” The view of the Standing Conference is that the size of the District Centre (and the policies in

WEL10-12) appears unlikely to achieve this. We understand that the (mainly food) retail superstore is the smallest floorspace that a major retailer would currently consider and while Welborne inhabitants can expect to look to Fareham for a higher range of shopping needs, the new community will start badly if it fails to get sufficient commercial investment to be an attractive alternative for day to day needs – ultimately the new community will be the size of Petersfield and a comparison with its offer is instructive, although the retail position in Fareham is more complex.

21. Location of schools There is a wide agreement among Standing Conference members that the proposed location of the secondary and first primary school to the east of the A32 would be a mistake. The Standing Conference held a workshop on education in December last year(see separate note) and agreed that the best outcomes in a new community were likely to be achieved by putting new schools at the heart of a new community as close as possible to new housing and to the district centre. This will not only maximise use of shared facilities (increasingly critical as public funding for new build is reduced), including parking, and encourage creation of shared use leisure such as a swimming pool but also maximise the use of green travel and contribute to self containment. This is particularly critical in the early phase of the development. By contrast locating the first primary and secondary school to the east of the A32 would involve significant additional expense on bridges and crossings and make all these objectives harder to achieve. The view of members is that the land to the east of the A32 should be left as a reserve site for use in the final phase of development if required. Policies WEL 3, WEL14 and 15 need to be altered to this effect.

22. Green Buffers with surrounding communities There is significant concern about the adequacy of the green buffers proposed for existing communities as set out in policies WEL 3 and WEL 5. While one solution would be to increase the size of these buffers this would push the reduced site area into higher density. The preferred solution therefore would be to establish a policy requirement in WEL% that development in those areas of the new community which adjoin the green buffers should not exceed a figure of around 20 homes per hectare. There is also a concern that the current wording of policy WEL5 could lead to a proliferation over time of buildings such as scout huts or skate parks and that these should be provided for outside the buffer which should have a tougher no development requirement to safeguard the future role of these spaces.

We look forward to being able to review the revised plan when it is subject to pre-submission consultation.

Yours sincerely

Henry Cleary

Chair, Welborne Standing Conference

Welborne Standing Conference – Workshop to prepare response to consultation on draft Welborne Plan, 4th June at Fareham Borough Council Offices, 3-5pm.

Attendance

| Name/Title | Organisation |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Cllr Pamela Bryant | Fareham Borough Council |
| Cllr Paul Whittle | Fareham Borough Council |
| Cllr Patricia Stallard | Hampshire County CouncilCC |
| Cllr Victoria Weston | Winchester City Council |
| Gary Jeffries | Solent Local Enterprise Partnership |
| Charlie Hughes | Smart Futures/BST group |
| David Griffiths | Buckland Development Ltd |
| Laura McCulloch | Hampshire County Council |
| Steve Tilbury | Winchester City Council |
| Clive Wright | Town Centre Management |
| Nigel Duncan | Fareham College |
| Paul O'Beirne | Community Action Fareham |
| David Walton | Wallington Village Community Association |
| Sheila Chambers | Knowle Village Residents' Association |
| Ed Morell | Funtley Residents' Association |
| Nicola Jane | Radian Housing Association |
| Brenda Clapperton MBE | The Fareham Society |
| Bruce Voss | HCA |
| Jeremy Tremellen | Hampshire Police |
| Stuart Roberts | PUSH |
| Michael Carter | The Wickham Society |
| Heather Walmsley | Hampshire County Council |
| John Waterfield | First Wessex |

Written comments were
provided in advance by:

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cllr Therese Evans | Wickham Parish Council |
| Rev. Paul Bedford | Christians Together in Fareham |

Henry Cleary

Chair, Welborne Standing
Conference

Standing Conference: Summary list of policies in the draft Welborne Plan (policies are indicative and do not fix locations except for those with an *which form part of the policies map, Figure 3.3 in the Plan). This list is a brief summary – see the draft plan for policies in full.

1. **High Level development principles (WEL1 and 2):** the overall approach to sustainable design, commitment to net gains in biodiversity and green infrastructure, green buffers with surrounding communities; the approach to transport including access via A32/Junction 10 and commitment to BRT and smarter choices/more sustainable travel; provision of 78,650sq.m of employment mainly in southern part/close to Jc10 and including a range of retail and community facilities; a cluster of educational facilities to the east of A32; a large central green space easily accessed from all areas. Also covers housing types, meeting places, sustainable drainage, development of 21st century Garden City principles and commitment to a strong urban form.
2. **Allocation of land (WEL3)*Land within the policies map – figure 3.3 of the draft plan:** the map sets out the settlement boundaries, the location and extent of green buffers with adjoining communities, the location of the secondary school and capacity for 6,500 homes and 78,650 sq m of employment space by 2041.
3. **Requirement for development proposals to follow a comprehensive approach/masterplan (WEL4 and (WEL6)** Developer masterplans to follow ‘garden city’ principles, include a design statement and include detailed layouts eg green infrastructure and access routes.
4. **Maintaining settlement separation (WEL5)** restrictions on development close to Fareham, Funtley, Knowle, Wickham.
5. **Design Principles and Strategic Design Code (WEL 7 and 8)** Council to prepare a Strategic Design Guide and require each phase of development to include a design statement on how character, setting and constraints have been treated.
6. **Breakdown of employment (WEL9)** Of the total 39-44,000sq.m. offices (and a business incubation centre) close to district centre and up to 40,000sq.m.of B2,B8 located mainly to east of A32.
7. **District Centre (WEL10, 11,12)** Located just west of A32 and to include range of convenience and comparison shopping, community building (480 sq m to include sports, arts and library facilities and 192sq m police hub), healthcare facilities(primary care including up to 9 GP surgeries) and residential developed around a market square and well served by BRT and by green corridor walking and cycling routes to residential areas. Retail impact study requirement to demonstrate no adverse impacts on Fareham and Wickham.
8. **Village/local centres (to north of Knowle Rd and west of A32 and to west of Dean Farm) (WEL13)** To provide small scale retail, employment and community facilities, served by BRT and in keeping with wider design principles etc.
9. **Primary and pre-school provision(WEL14)** Requires in sequence a temporary primary school before occupation of the 100th house; a 2 form entry primary east of A32 (with cycle/pedestrian bridge)with potential to develop as an all through school and community use facilities(ahead of other community buildings);a 2 form entry primary north of Knowle Road ;a 3 form entry west of Dean Farm; all with nursery provision and well connected – bus/cycle/green corridor.
10. **Secondary school (WEL15)** Requires a 7 form entry secondary school on a 9 ha site east of A32 and well connected – bus/cycle/green corridor.

11. **Transport plan (WEL16)** Requirement for development proposals to include full transport assessment and a strategy to deliver self containment, travel reduction and sustainable travel objectives including BRT access and funding of necessary transport enhancements and to minimise impacts on local/strategic road network.
12. **Road transport(WEL17)** Access to be via A32 and Jc10 and new network within site to include N-S movement parallel to A32. Off-site improvements to Jc111(if required), to A32 and to 8 locations on local road network.
13. **Public Transport (WEL18-19)** Requires extension of BRT to link new community to Fareham station and, via new routes,to Portsmouth. Potential for provision of new rail halt N of Funtly. To be supported by public transport and sustainable travel plans as part of s106 agreement with developer.
14. **Cycle/Pedestrian routes (WEL20)** New routes Fareham-Wickham, to new schools, to Fareham Town Centre/station and measures to encourage cycling/walking.
15. **Housing (WEL21-24)** Provides desired breakdown of market housing sizes, lifetime homes, self build; affordable housing target of 30-40% subject to viability, private rental of 5-10% of stock and 120 extra care units at affordable rent.
16. **Green Infrastructure (WEL25)** A detailed open space strategy will set out proposals for parks, sports pitches, allotments, play areas and standards they should meet.
17. **Impact on biodiversity (WEL 26/7)** Requirement for development proposals to assess impact on biodiversity and make alternative provision including 92 ha at Dashwood, Knowle and Fareham Common, agree joint management with Winchester CC, enhance existing assets/features and make cash contribution to Solent disturbance/mitigation programme.
18. **Green Corridors(WEL28/9)** Provision/management/adoption.
19. **Energy Strategy(WEL30)** To include optimising energy efficiency, low and zero carbon technologies and selective use of CHP and passivhaus standards.
20. **Water (WEL31/2/3)** Strategy/plans to include Code 4 CSH standards for new homes, protection of aquifers and use of SUDS to reduce flood risk with no net run off.
21. **Household Waste Recycling Centre (WEL34)**- additional facility at Pink's Timberyard.
22. **Landscaping(WEL35/6)** Requirement for structural and detailed proposals to fit overall Landscape and Habitats Framework Plan.
23. **Heritage(WEL37)** Assessment and conservation of site heritage assets.
24. **Delivery and phasing(WEL38)** Requirement for development proposals to meet implementation and **phasing plan****. Management of construction impacts via s106 and requirement for employment/training plan to support local jobs and skills.

****Phasing of development** Chapter 11 indicates that this is still being developed(with further work on infrastructure and viability to be concluded later this year. Emerging approach suggests **Phase 1** areas close to A32 and District Centre(to provide facilities early in development) and possibly area around village centre north of Knowle Road –total of 650 homes by 2020(together with BRT, primary scholl and Jc 10 works) with infrastructure works starting in 2015 and housing completions in 2016. In phase 2 (2020-5) around 1420 homes est of A32 and along Knowle Rd. In phase 3 (2025-31)around 2000 homes in central area and to N. of Knowle Road with completion of district and Knowle Rd village centres. In phase 4 a final 2500 homes in south and west of site and north at Hoads Hill.