

3rd February 2021

Wickwar Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list Start of year 01/04/20

Tn no	Cheque Details		Gross	Vat	Net date	Invoice
204	BACS21020 3WF	£145.92	£24.32	£121.60	18/12/20	WALKER FIRE UK - Fire extinguisher service £145.92
214	BACS21020 £9.99 3HP1	£9.99	£1.67	£8.32	19/12/20	HP INK - 18/11/20 - 17/12/20 ink
*216	DD210111T £10.00	£10.00	£0.00	£10.00	08/01/21	TESCO MOBILE - DEC 20 bill
	M					
208	BACS21020 3NAV	£64.99	£10.83	£54.16	17/01/21	Norton Anti Virus - Annual antivirus software o Jan 2022 £64.99
203	BACS21020 £123.80 3SLCC1	£123.80	£0.80	£123.00	19/01/21	SLCC Enterprises Ltd - 12th Ed Local Council Administration (book)
1		£119.00	£0.00	£119.00		CNCL 12th Ed Local Council Administration (book)
2		£4.80	£0.80	£4.00		CNCL Delivery charge
207	BACS21020 £54.00 3SLCC2	£54.00	£9.00	£45.00	19/01/21	SLCC Enterprises Ltd - Clerk SW Regional Training Seminar 24/03/21
215	BACS21020 £9.99 3HP2	£9.99	£1.67	£8.32	19/01/21	HP INK - 18/12/20 - 17/01/21 ink
206	BACS21020 £5.00 3RED	£5.00	£0.00	£5.00	20/01/21	R E DAVIS - Feb 21 expenses 200 A4 punch pockets
205	BACS21020 3ALCA	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	21/01/21	ALCA - Internal Financial Controls training 10/12/20 £30.00
		£1,507.17	£0.00	£1,507.17		Confidential
Total		£1,960.86	£48.29	£1,912.57		

Paid between meetings*

Local Plan 2020 Phase 1 Consultation: Response from Wickwar Parish Council

Creating sustainable rural villages and settlements

Qu 14 Do you agree with our proposed approach to the national policy issues highlighted, like flood risk, the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt, and other planning considerations and issues?

Yes

Qu 15 Do you have any comments on our proposed approach to investigate an appropriate level of growth in our rural villages and settlements?

Wickwar Parish Council broadly agrees with the five key sustainability and planning policy considerations identified for investigating appropriate levels of growth in rural villages.

It is noted however, that consideration 4 – sustainable access to key services and facilities, does not explicitly mention sustainable access to employment. The huge impact of commuting by private car from South Gloucestershire's villages on Issue1: Climate change mitigation, Issue 2: Climate change adaptation and resilience and Issue 41: Decarbonising transport, are simply not addressed in the consultation document. Any new development in rural areas will increase commuting by car, without significant investment in infrastructure and public transport linking South Gloucestershire villages with market towns and the urban fringe of Bristol. This is particularly the case in Wickwar, as is set out below.

The Parish Council makes the following observations about how these considerations apply to the village of Wickwar specifically.

Consideration 2. The level of planned and speculative growth that has been built or approved in individual communities in recent years, if applicable

This consideration is particularly relevant to the village of Wickwar which has experienced a large amount of speculative growth, outside of the provisions of the existing Core Strategy and Policies, Sites and Places Plan. 189 houses have been approved in recent years according to the Data and Access Profile for Wickwar, and the vast majority were part of speculative applications. This represents an increase of 30-32% in the housing stock depending on which baseline figure is used. Such development has not served to enhance infrastructure nor access to services in any meaningful way due to its unplanned nature. Wickwar is currently subject to a further speculative development proposal for 130 houses east of Inglestone Road.

Firstly, South Gloucestershire Council must look at the levels of speculative development that have already been accommodated in rural villages, and prioritise for development those villages and settlements which have had limited or no recent development, and where they meet the other criteria. It would not be acceptable to share new development across all rural settlements without taking account of the 'unplanned' development which has already been accommodated by communities without consultation or planned improvements to infrastructure.

Secondly South Gloucestershire Council must consider the original settlement size before unplanned development, in order to reach a conclusion about what is an acceptable level of small or medium-sized growth for that settlement.

Finally, the type of housing that has been provided by unplanned developments must be examined when considering any further development, and specifically which housing needs have not been met. The aspiration set out in the consultation document is that ‘planning for some level of growth can play an important role in making sure that the long term vitality, vibrancy and overall sustainability of our rural communities is maintained by increasing opportunities for home ownership and renting for younger people, families and an increasingly ageing population that want to stay in, or move back to, their communities.’

Wickwar Parish Council supports this aspiration and notes that the development which has taken place over the last few years has been substantial in Wickwar with many high-end, large houses. The ability of the local community in particular to afford to obtain such houses is limited, as affordability is an issue. How will the local plan ensure that any further development meets unmet needs and provides truly affordable housing?

Consideration 4 - Key sustainability issues – sustainable access to key services and facilities, small and rural schools, and access to superfast broadband

Where key services and facilities are not accessible by walking and cycling, they should be within an appropriate distance of a bus stop, served by an appropriate level of public transport services that connect to destinations that offer the remaining key services and facilities

For the purposes of this section, an appropriate level of public transport service is considered to be:

- 1. Individual or combined services, total journey time under 1 hour.**
- 2. At least 5 services a day during the week, 3 at weekends, to and from the destination.**
- 3. During the week; one service arriving at the destination before 9am, and one leaving after 5pm**

Wickwar has very poor provision of infrastructure in terms of local services and facilities, especially given its recent expansion. Any additional level of housing would require additional use of motor vehicles to allow residents to access such services and facilities. This would only exacerbate the volume of traffic and the subsequent knock-on effect of noise pollution and safety issues on the current residents.

The isolation of Wickwar with very poor provision of public transport and cycle routes leaves the car as the only viable option which requires a significant number of trips for shopping, employment and education. How does this address the need to decarbonise transport?

The Creating Sustainable Rural Villages and Settlements section of the consultation document claims, incorrectly, that Wickwar has ‘walking and cycling access to a range of services and facilities and, or public transport connections (mostly below 30 minute journeys) to places containing facilities not within walking and cycling distance. On face value, development in these locations could reduce dependency on car journeys.’ In fact a request is still extant for a footpath and cycle path to link Wickwar to Chipping Sodbury which was raised in 2011 under the local transport priority list for South Gloucestershire. Without this being implemented the claim that walking and cycling access to services and facilities is achievable is not a true statement.

Wickwar Parish Council strongly contests that Wickwar should be listed alongside Chipping Sodbury, Thornbury and Yate in terms of the ease of access to services. The Data and Access Profile for Wickwar, which is considered by the Parish Council to be accurate with regards to the location of essential services, clearly shows that there is walking and cycling access to a very limited number of facilities. Crucially there is no shop/convenience store or post office in the village, and nor is there one within walking or cycling distance. The Data and Access Profile is not accurate with regards to public transport services in Wickwar – see below.

In fact, the consultation document goes on to list a second set of villages with limited walking and cycling access to services and limited public transport, that are more comparable with Wickwar than Yate and Chipping Sodbury. Wickwar Parish Council argues that Wickwar should be included within the second category of settlements described in the consultation document as follows:

'Some of the villages and settlements in this option, such as Engine Common, Falfield, Hawkesbury Upton, Marshfield, Rangeworthy, Severn Beach and Tytherington have walking and cycling access to a limited number of services and facilities. Higher levels of development in these locations would be likely to be dependent on public transport, with most of the current services presenting a journey time of under 30 minutes, but with variations in journey length and number of destinations that can be connected to, which will need to be explored further. Reliance on rural public transport is considered to have a less positive impact on reducing car dependency than development in locations which also have walking and cycling access to a wider range of key services and facilities.'

It is also important to point out that, unlike a number of the villages placed in this group, Wickwar does not even have a shop. This means that, exactly like the second list of villages 'development in these locations would be likely to be dependent on public transport', and in fact more so because it is not possible to purchase basic necessities without using public transport. The description of the problems with public transport in these villages is also applicable to Wickwar, as is explained below.

Wickwar Parish Council welcomes a definition of 'an appropriate level of public transport service' as set out in the consultation document. It is an imperfect definition however, because there is likely to be much variation between public transport provision in villages that meet it. Furthermore, contrary to information provided in the Data and Access Profile for Wickwar and statements made about Wickwar in the consultation document, Wickwar does NOT have an 'appropriate level of public transport service' according to the definition.

There is a bus service, but the service only runs during the day at 1.5 – 2 hourly intervals and stops at night and on Sunday. Please note therefore that Wickwar does NOT meet the criteria for an 'appropriate level of public transport service' specified in the consultation document because there are no services on a Sunday. (The appropriate level is considered to be 3 services a day at the weekend). Also, the Data and Access Profile for Wickwar states that there is a bus service meeting the above criteria to Filton. There is NO service to Filton that meets the criteria. It must be concluded that the existing bus services in Wickwar are not a reliable option for travel and this results in reliance on the car.

Finally, as set out above, this consideration makes no specific mention of sustainable access to employment. In relation to Wickwar the issues of Climate change mitigation, Climate change adaptation and resilience and Decarbonising transport are, and will continue to be, significantly impacted by reliance on private cars for commuting. It must be noted that although Wickwar has a bus service to the nearby market town of Yate, this does NOT mean that people commuting for work can use this service to connect with onward services from the railway and bus stations. There are

only two buses to Yate that arrive before 9am. The first service leaves at 6:35 and takes 1 hour 15 minutes, making it unsuitable for commuting, and the second, quicker bus, does not arrive until 8:50. This is too late to connect to onward services for employment. Without significant improvements to local bus services and transport connectivity between Wickwar and Yate/ other market towns, any further development will increase reliance on private cars for commuting,

Consideration 5- Key planning designations and considerations;

- **Flood Risk, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belt**
- **Impact on important ecological, heritage, local landscape assets and character.**

With regard to consideration 5, Wickwar High Street is designated as a conservation area and is an area of special architectural and historic interest which needs to be preserved. The addition of housing should take this into account so as to preserve this aspect. This need is not clearly enforced in the consultation document.

Wickwar is noted as outside the green belt but due consideration should be given to the fact that it is right on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and next to a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) and sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). This is touched on in the proposal, but the impact of any new development needs to be assessed against the need to minimise the impact on these areas as a whole. A clear statement for the need to protect and conserve the rural area's distinctive character, beauty, wildlife, landscape, biodiversity and heritage would be beneficial.

Qu 16 Are there any other planning issues you think we should consider?

Wickwar is between the two market towns of Yate and Thornbury and is also a short cut route for traffic travelling to the M5 north and south towards Bristol. The additional building proposed for Yate and Thornbury will only increase the current high level of traffic. Perhaps the consultation document should look at this issue with highways and propose action to mitigate this problem as a key requirement before any new development in those areas is taken forward. Additional traffic as the result of any new development will also need to be assessed on the road through Wickwar.

Infrastructure is very poor in Wickwar as shown by the Data Access Profile (DAP) report as there are no shops, doctors, dentists, library provision, post office, secondary schools, train station and a very poor public transport service. The roads through Wickwar are seeing very high volumes of traffic for a designated B road. Should not the consultation plan address this aspect by requiring developers to address these short falls as a contractual obligation so that any development can be proven to be sustainable?