

WNP Monthly Report to Wheatley and Holton Parish Councils For November 2017. John Fox, Chairman,

On 24 November we held our regular 3-hour Workshop with SODC. The lead-advisor, Ricardo Rios, came to SODC a year ago with 6 years WNP experience in Gloucestershire and has earned considerable respect. Ricardo discussed the Draft WNP and SODC's supportive Draft LP with an experienced NP Examiner. SODC advise that our WNP is 'unusual' (in the positive sense), 'a new idea untested' (it tackles challenging issues), but that as the *Localities Act (2011)* is still new, the legal precedents are too few to allow SODC to predict how Examiners might react.

SODC further advise :

- a) that the Draft WNP (still to be improved and strengthened) be submitted complete with its original content**, from strategic OBU site and 'Railway' site, to the Littleworth 'exchange', and the proposed changes of Green Belt status in the eastern end of the village.
- b) that we should move away from submitting a basic WNP which if 'made' could then propose a revision to include the remaining proposals relevant to Wheatley once LP2033 were finalised.** On further review SODC consider this approach would impact on the chances of success of the LP 2033 being able to release land from the Green Belt.
- c) While WNP understandably want some much-needed benefit for Wheatley, the *Localities Act* does not allow haggling over so-called 'contingency sites'. The policies to benefit Wheatley should therefore be presented as just that – proposals **additional** to the main Strategic LP proposal, which seek to 'regenerate', 'rationalise' or 'improve' the village, but **not conditional** on whether OBU site produces housing or not.**
- d) This is mainly what makes the WNP a 'challenging' and untested new idea. It goes the extra mile. However, if the OBU site is sold to a corporate buyer and is not developed for housing, then Wheatley housing would be expected to grow by 15%. Any housing already built since 2011, e.g. the upper London Rd site, and infill sites on Church Rd, would be part of that calculation. WNP calculated in 2016 that 24.3% of the current 1773 Wheatley homes were built post-1980.**

Meanwhile, we are now required to commission an **SEA (Strategic and Environmental Assessment)** to gauge the environmental impact of our proposals against a range of reasonable alternatives. This will help strengthen our proposals considerably. It carries the requirement of a **6-week Public Consultation** which with different focuses and a Public Meeting will enrich our 8-week Consultation of last May-June. We have agreed a contract with a Consultant for a **Basic Conditions Statement** about our Draft WNP when it reaches its final state in February/March. **Site Assessment** material from WNP's 20-month research is being handed to SODC for their consultations. A full and updated account of WNP Public Consultation 2016-2017 is also being drafted into a legally required **Consultation Statement** for the Draft WNP.

Finally we are now advised to submit **traffic and infrastructure issues direct to OCC and to SODC's Traffic Planner.** these will include the bridge question, OBU – Wheatley and the list will be published.

**John Fox, WNP Chairman
28 November 2017**