

Cllr Craig Manuel
Chair Wickham and Knowle Parish
Council
Parish Office
Knowle Village Hall
Fareham
PO17 5GR

Your Ref:
Our ref: AF/NP
Contact: Adrian Fox
Direct Line: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

26 February 2025

Dear Cllr Manuel,

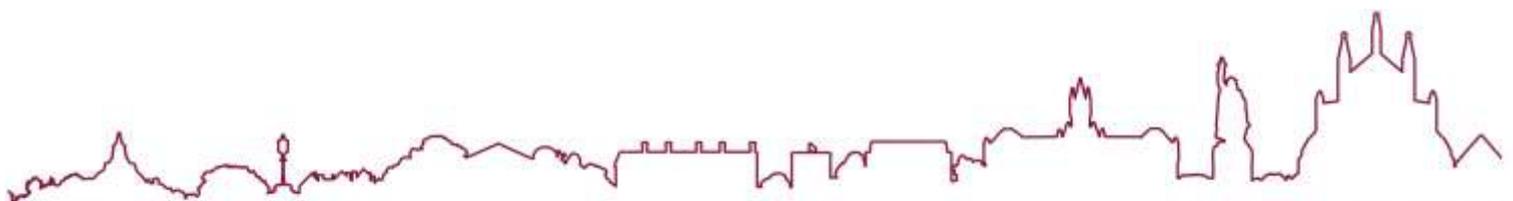
Request to Winchester City Council to designate Wickham and Knowle Parish as a Neighbourhood Area

I refer to your letter dated 31st January 2025 requesting the designation of Wickham and Knowle as a Neighbourhood Area.

Designating a Neighbourhood Area

The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations have been amended with the effect that the City Council must designate a Neighbourhood Area which is proposed by a Parish Council and which covers the whole of its Parish (Regulation 5A, Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012). Accordingly, the City Council hereby designates Wickham and Knowle as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. The above Regulations also specify that the normal consultation and publicity arrangements for designating a Neighbourhood Area do not need to be followed in these circumstances, although the City Council will put details of your request on its website and notify adjoining authorities to meet the requirements of Regulation 7 following designation.

You will be aware that a Neighbourhood Plan must be subject to an independent examination to ensure compliance with a series of *'basic conditions' as set out under the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. These include a requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the *'Development Plan'*. The Development Plan in relation to Wickham and Knowle Parish currently consists of the Winchester District Local Plan (Parts 1 and 2), the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpersons' Development Plan Document and the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. These plans include the *'strategic policies'* with which the Neighbourhood Plan will need to comply. Government guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework



(NPPF) states that the planning authority should provide an indicative housing requirement figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body (NPPF paragraph 70).

Allocating sites for development

Policy MTRA3 in the adopted Local Plan states that '*other development proposals may be supported to reinforce a settlement's role and function, to meet a community need or to realise local community aspirations. These should be identified through a Neighbourhood Plan...*'. Therefore, the City Council would advise that the Neighbourhood Plan may, but is not required to, promote small or medium scale development (up to 1 hectare) to meet local needs and aspirations. This is likely to be within or adjoining the boundary of Wickham or Knowle and could involve amendments to the current settlement boundary, if approved through the Neighbourhood Plan.

The City Council's Regulation 19 Local Plan is now at an advanced stage, and given work has not yet commenced on the Wickham and Knowle Neighbourhood Plan, we do want to make it clear that it will therefore likely not be able to affect the outcome of the imminent Local Plan examination. The Wickham and Knowle Neighbourhood Plan will instead need to be forward looking at the next Local Plan.

You will be aware that the government has significantly increased the City Council's housing requirement from 676 homes per year to 1,157 homes per year across the district and allocating appropriate sites to meet this housing requirement will be a key issue for the City Council. The City Council considers that the Neighbourhood Plan should limit itself to dealing with non-strategic scale housing developments and should not seek to either promote or resist strategic-scale sites. Whether these are necessary and suitable will be considered at the strategic scale, through the next Local Plan process.

Local Plan timetable

The Regulation 19 Local Plan that is currently the subject of a Local Plan examination procedure sets out new strategic policies to meet future housing and other development needs. At a meeting on the [12th February 2025](#) Cabinet agreed an updated Local Development Scheme (the timetable for the adoption of the Local Plan 2040 and the timetable for the next Local Plan).

Governance of the Wickham and Knowle Neighbourhood Plan

In terms of governance, the City Council notes in your letter that you have established a project team to oversee the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The City Council considers it will be very important that the members of this project team are not seen to be in any way biased or have any interest in any land or policies that may form part of the Neighbourhood Plan. We do know from our work with other Parish Councils and from a number of years of working on other Neighbourhood Plans that it will therefore be vital that the membership of a Neighbourhood Plan project group and how it operates is completely transparent as this can be expected to come under very close scrutiny from external stakeholders. With this in mind, it appears essential that the terms of reference and the membership of this group are made very clear from the outset and for complete transparency and to avoid FOI/EIR requests, these should be published on the Neighbourhood Plan website. It would be helpful if you could please be so kind as to confirm that this is in hand as this will avoid problems later on in the process.

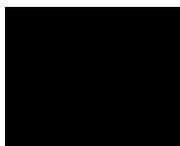
Funding Streams

We would encourage you to look at the [Locality website](#) as this contains a wealth of information on Neighbourhood Plans and the various funding streams that Parish Councils can access. We would also strongly encourage you to meet with other Parish/Town Councils such as New Alresford Town Council as they are at a more advanced stage with their Neighbourhood Plan in terms of lessons learnt/good practice.

Key contact

As we now have a number of Neighbourhood Plans on at the moment, my colleague Toby Ayling has agreed to be the main point of contact. Toby and myself would be happy to discuss any matters arising as you work through the Neighbourhood Plan process and advise as necessary. It may also be useful to touch base with either yourself or a representative from the project team every couple of months to update each other on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan and new Local Plan.

Yours sincerely,



Adrian Fox
Strategic Planning Manager

Cc. Cllr Jackie Porter
Cllr Neil Cutler
Cllr Chris Chamberlain

Clr Angela Clear