

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENTS (Sept 2014)

SS 1 – LOCAL SUPPORT FOR WELBORNE (ISSUE 1 – Wed 15 Oct)

Does Welborne have local support? – In a word NO
All the local Community Groups oppose it, as does CPRE (Hants)

633 people took the trouble to make representations over the Welborne plan – 21 supported and thought it was “Sound” – a massive 610 opposed it.
The position of our local MP’s is quite telling:

Welborne straddles x 2 Parliamentary Constituencies, Fareham: (Mark Hoban MP) & Meon Valley: (George Hollingbery MP). The majority of the site falls under the latter’s jurisdiction (Meon Valley) and it is pertinent to reflect, that he has serious concerns over the Welborne plan, specifically:

- The Development schedule
- Traffic congestion
- The Unquantified flooding risk
- Inadequacy of the settlement Buffers
- He supports Noise reduction measures on the M27 and would wish to see how Air Quality can be improved

In Summary:

The proposed development @ Welborne, has very little, if indeed any “Local support”. - You will no doubt be aware of the precedent set @ Mayfields New Town (Gatwick/Crawley) a couple of years ago (Where a similarly unjustified development proposal, was rejected at EIP, as being totally against local interest and the Localism Agenda).

SS 2 – CONSULTATION (ISSUE 1 – Wed 15 Oct)

Have FBC consulted – Yes

Has their consultation been effective – NO
Has their consultation been honest, factual & considered – NO

Have they acted upon the output from the consultation – NO
Specifically:

In Jan 2011, the Community Groups formally recorded a “Vote of No Confidence” over the manner in which FBC had “consulted” in the forum of the Community Liaison Group (CLG) Meetings - which were the fore-runner of the Standing Conference . (That Vote of No Confidence Ltr is attached at Appendix 1)
Additionally, you ought to be aware, that a few months ago, there were some very acrimonious exchanges both in the local Press and at the June Standing Conference Mtg of 26 June 2014, which drew yet another formal rebuke from the Community Groups (That rebuke Ltr is also attached, at Appendix 2)

Disillusionment over FBC's so called "consultation" continues to this day and indeed it may well be, that by the time of the EiP in Oct, the local Community Groups will have resigned "en masse" from the Standing Conference in protest over the lip-service being paid by FBC.

The local Community Groups unanimously agreed that they had never been offered a "Shopping List" and categorically stated, they had NOT been offered an input into how their 15% share of the CIL ought or indeed might be spent)

Have FBC "consulted" over the way in which the local Communities would wish to see "their 15% share" of the CIL (some £7M), would be spent - NO

What FBC have done however, is to set the Welborne CIL @ ZERO, take all the risk themselves in order to press ahead with Welborne (and are proposing to give some £45M to the Welborne Developers) – all in an attempt to make Welborne "financially viable" – I have to ask the question, were Fareham residents aware of/consulted upon the Councils decision ? – Clearly the answer is yet another big - NO

In conclusion, the reality is that FBC have consulted in "an entirely minimalist way", so as to "Tick the Box" and have largely ignored the numerous contributions that the Community Groups have made to the Welborne debate over the past few years: They have for example @ the Core Strategy stage, completely ignored and refused to debate, a 2,000 plus signature petition AGAINST Welborne, additionally, they withdrew from their own website (because it wasn't going their way!), an Online petition AGAINST Welborne.

The choice and layout of M27 J10 has been mired in controversy from the outset. The current, albeit only proposed layout for this Junction, together with its associated discussion document, was uploaded onto the FBC website on 7 Apr 2014, a mere 4 days before the consultation period ended on 11/4/2014.

SS 3 – LOCALISM (ISSUE's 1 & 2 – Wed 15 Oct)

Most people would absolutely support the concept of "Localism", but what does it mean?

Does it mean that an un-elected Organisation such as PUSH (Partnership for Urban South Hants) or indeed the LEP'S (Local Enterprise Partnerships ought to have such power?.

To our mind, what "Localism" is supposed to be all about, is taking full & proper account of what "local people" (ie: those in the immediate vicinity – say within 2 or 3 miles of Welborne) think about the proposal – There has been no such or indeed any other "Referendum" on Welborne; what we have experienced thus far, is absolutely NOT localism! – It has been a PUSH derived Dictat !

As an indication of how strongly people feel about this, there is currently a Govt E petition running <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/67476> , which opposes Greenfield development @ Fareham and demands there is a much wider Public debate on Welborne and the impact it will ACTUALLY have on existing Residents – To date (20/9/2014), that petition has attracted over 650 signatures (which we can assure you, is very significantly more support, than Welborne has ever had, at any stage in its gestation !!)

SS 4 - TRAFFIC CONGESTION (ISSUE 7 – Tues 21 Oct)

You will be aware that numerous representations regarding Welborne highlighted the issue of the existing traffic congestion across the Borough and that many local roads (including much of the proposed Welborne BRT route) are already gridlocked at peak times.

To quote FBC in a Ltr to Network Rail “Much of the strategic road network in the region is severely congested, particularly at peak times. The M27, A27 and A32 all regularly suffer from long delays caused partially by weight of traffic”
Despite repeated requests over the past 18 months, that HCC release the specific traffic flow data that their transport modelling has generated, they have refused to do so – surely this is a key part of the “Evidence base” and one can only wonder why there has been (and indeed remains) such a reluctance to release the information into the Public domain. Clearly the ability of the existing road network to absorb the additional traffic generated by Welborne is of fundamental concern to existing residents and is absolutely fundamental in terms of deciding whether or not the Welborne Plan is sound.

Of particular concern are certain key Traffic assumptions within the Welborne Plan, which we believe are fundamentally flawed; specifically the so called “key consideration” that by making J10 an “all moves” junction (7.18) it will reduce the traffic flow that joins the motorway at J10, goes East up to J11 and then does a “U turn” to head West on the M27. This section also completely ignores the inevitable consequence of increasing the functionality of J10, which will be to attract additional vehicle movements to that junction (from both North & South of the motorway on the A32).

What is particularly telling is The Telegraph article of 24 July 2014, which (based on ONS data) not only names (and frankly Shames) Fareham as “the most car-dependant town in the whole of the UK, but named it as one of the top 10 Traffic jam black spots in the Country”.

The HCC Traffic modelling, predicts that a mere 2% of Welborn derived vehicle movements will turn North and use the A32. Frankly, this prediction has been subject to much “local ridicule” - particularly so given that an independent traffic census conducted over a 12 hour period on 8 Sept 2014, revealed 8,628 Northbound vehicle movements @ the Roundabout immediately South of Wickham (Local Plan 3 – Figure 7.1 – location 1) refers.

You will appreciate, that it is extremely difficult to capture/quantify the extent to which Fareham pre-Welborne, is affected, by traffic congestion and at peak hours, gridlocked. Accordingly, a group of volunteers took part in “Operation Snap” earlier this month and took a series of date/time stamped photographs in various locations across the Borough, as “evidence” of just how bad the existing traffic congestion is. We would like to present you with the output of Operation Snap in the form of a short picture folio, at an appropriate point during the EiP.

For completeness, it should be noted that the Sustainability Appraisal for the SE Plan in 2006, recommended that the “Fareham SDA” (as it was then known) be deleted from the SE Plan, due to problems of Air Quality, due to Traffic congestion.

You will be aware that HCC's have still not completed their assessment of the traffic impact that Welborne will generate on the existing road network and furthermore, with regard to the proposed Welborne BRT route, are on record as saying that they can offer few if any real palliatives. I would suggest that this is yet further evidence, that the proposed Welborne development is UNSOUND.

On the EVIDENCE thus far, there is only one conclusion that can be drawn; namely that HCC do not have a viable plan for dealing with the Welborne traffic and indeed there is tacit admission of this fact within their section of the Welborne Plan.

SS 5 - QA HOSPITAL (ISSUE 6 – Friday 17 Oct)

Despite previous assurances “that QA can cope” with Welborne (WP 088 response refers) it is becoming increasingly apparent that this is NOT the case and indeed there have recently been significant levels of adverse publicity in the local press on this very subject. Specifically, in Aug of this year:

The Head of Health watch Portsmouth said “There is real public concern about A & E Waiting times, with QA only achieving 85% of its benchmark target of 95% (Seeing, treating & discharging A & E patients within 4 hrs) Clearly the situation is now unsustainable..”

The Head of the Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group is on record as saying “Performance has been unacceptably poor for a considerable period, with the service standard not having been met for the past 5 quarters”

No doubt the question posed by FBC to the Portsmouth Hospital Trust was “Welborne specific” – but who we would ask, is taking the Corporate view? (27,000 new homes are being planned/imposed by Fareham, Winchester & Eastleigh Councils, a significant number of which will fall within the QA Catchment area). This is a critical healthcare issue, that we suggest needs to be re-visited; dare we suggest, that the person who needs to take that “Corporate view” is indeed your good self !.

SS 6 - DOWNSTREAM FLOODING RISK (ISSUE 9 – Wed 22 Oct)

Not only has the downstream flooding risk to Wallington (River Wallington) and Funtley & Tichfield (River Meon) yet to be assessed – which is itself an unacceptable shortcoming in the Welborne plan – but furthermore, it fails to reflect local examples of “best practice” in managing the downstream flooding risk.

A mere 10 miles from Welborne, Havant Borough Council under their Planning policy DM 25, are managing the Flooding risk in Emsworth, by requiring Developers to not only “maintain the status quo”, but to demonstrate the extent to which the downstream flood risk can be REDUCED.

You will no doubt be aware, that earlier this month on the Govt. Planning portal, the need to strengthen planning policy regarding the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) is now recognised following a joint consultation between DEFRA/Dept for Communities & Local government. Even at this late juncture, there are no details available as to the type of SUDS being proposed for Welborne.

The Environment Agency are currently leading on a funded Project that seeks to address a wide range of both tidal & fluvial improvements to reduce the flood risk to Wallington – given the potentially significant impact of Welborne on this issue, it is highly likely that the EA will be seeking financial contributions from the developers – and this is yet another issue you would wish to factor in, when considering the financial viability of the Welborne project.

SS 7 - FINANCIAL VIABILITY/INFRASTRUCTURE AFFORDABILITY (ISSUES: 7 & 8 – Tues 21 Oct and Issue 11 – Thurs 23 Oct)

Even allowing for the £45M for which Welborne has been shortlisted from the Govt's "Large Site's Infrastructure programme" (15/08/2014) the funding of the remainder of the massive infrastructure investment that is required, remains of MAJOR concern.