

Highlights

- **TATA LAND TO WEST OF WINCHCOMBE, DEVELOPERS COME TO TOWN.**
- **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – SLOWLY PROGRESSING BUT NOT REALLY PROTECTING US!**
- **AONB – IS PROTECTED STATUS GOING TO BE WORTH ANYTHING IN THE FUTURE?**

Winchcombe Issues

*The Newsletter of
Friends of Winchcombe
May 2016*



We must be vigilant

Winchcombe is 'consulted' on the Turley / Tata site for development.

At the recent public consultation event (on 22nd March 2016), Turley, representatives of the land owners Tata Steel, outlined the plans for the development of a parcel of land behind Kyderminster Road.

The event attracted a number of people and over the time I was in attendance, there was pretty uniform hostility to the site, the development as planned and the concepts of AONB development.

The common themes being brought up were inappropriate development of the site, with unproven need for the social housing content that is out of alignment with our Town Council's view. The Town Council have stated that we should investigate our social housing need in 2020. The developers expressed a desire to start building in 2017 with completion therefore being before 2020, although no planning application has been formally lodged.

Overall this is, in our opinion, the wrong site, at the wrong time. It clearly demonstrates that the Neighbourhood Plan has so far not stopped any developer from chancing their arm on an AONB site. The Neighbourhood Plan has opened up the discussion of AONB sites for development and quite possibly encouraged developers.

Objecting to planning applications – valid reasons to object to and FOW advice

We are preparing generic advice and valid reasons for objecting to Planning Applications in our next newsletter and adding specific advice to the Lovewinchcombe website when actual Planning Applications are lodged.

The High Street and Budgens opening

Warner's Budgens

Sausages from Moreton in Marsh, soup from Blockley and bread from Tewkesbury amongst other items, Warner's Budgens are genuinely sticking to their ethos of 'buying local', where possible. The new store in Winchcombe opened recently after the cutting of the ribbon ceremony, attended by locals and Winchcombe Abbey School pupils. Healthy competition for local businesses and a wider choice of goods for Winchcombe residents can only be a benefit to us all.

Co-op News

Final plans are being drawn up to provide Post Office services within the Co-op and this facility is expected sometime in August (but could possibly be sooner). Post Office services will be available on all of the Co-op's new "Combi" tills when they are installed and will also be available during the normal opening hours.

The Almsbury Farm Site - update.

Since Sudeley Castle held the public consultation, they have held further discussions with Tewkesbury Borough Council regarding the proposal and we are awaiting the results of this to become public.

So far however we do not have a planning application which has to be good news!

FOW Town Councillor reports

Stuart Maughan and Rupert Chislett have, as your local Councillors, begun to settle into the roles and we have found that there are a lot of behind the scenes meetings. It is still frustrating for us that the Neighbourhood Plan is progressing uninterrupted despite misgivings mentioned by a number of councillors.

FoW were never fence sitters; we are a campaigning organisation and we have taken that to our roles as Councillors.

Winchcombe Neighbourhood Plan update – Inspector selected.

The Neighbourhood Plan has now been formally handed over to Tewkesbury Borough Council and remains under their control until the referendum. As your Councillor, I attended a meeting at Tewkesbury where one matter was decided.

Friends of Winchcombe

WORKING FOR A BETTER WINCHCOMBE

1. The selection of candidates put forward as the NP Inspector and to be voted on by WTC. (The NP Inspector has subsequently been chosen).

No individual comments from residents were discussed or seemed to have had any impact on the process, which I found disconcerting. The only main concern discussed was a technical challenge by a land owner on land availability.

Nothing seems to have changed following our previous survey where had 90% of survey respondents wanted further consultation.

It was made clear that this may be an inspection without public involvement to challenge the NP.

SO IT LOOKS AS IF YOU WILL HAVE TO MAKE UP YOUR MIND ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AT THE REFERENCE.

It has often been said that without a Neighbourhood Plan, we will not be able to defend Winchcombe from developers. The recent TATA / Turley presentation suggest that the NP is not protecting us from anything and it has opened up a wider discussion on developing Winchcombe's AONB.

FOW Committee update

This has been a challenging period for FoW committee in terms of our new roles on the Council and the volume of work each member of the committee undertakes, plus a wish from two members to enjoy retirement in the full. It is with profound thanks that I have accepted Alan Cogbill and Allan Jenkins resignations.

The committee is now constituted as follows:

- Rupert Chislett, Chairman;
- Stuart Maughan, Treasurer

- Phil Parker, Secretary

We will be seeking and announcing new committee members at the next public meeting.

Road works, speeding traffic and parking in Winchcombe – More to come!

Guess what? We are to have more road works and disruption in Winchcombe. Severn Trent have decided that now we have resurfaced North Street, they need to come along and dig it up to change the water main. This will be lengthy work and will again cause disruption and inevitably cause interruption to our local businesses.

Timings are not yet set but it will be this year!

Speed signs at Littleworth and Cheltenham Road continue to show that we have a regular speeding issue on our approaches and into Winchcombe. The signs are due for rotation soon on other approach roads including Broadway Road.

AONB - Worth protecting?

"A Golden Anniversary Year"

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Cotswolds' AONB status. The AONB is a national legal designation for protection of countryside deemed important in its natural state and requiring protection. Long may it remain!

As stated previously, WTC through the Draft Neighbourhood Plan are actively promoting development of AONB.

This will create legal precedent to continue developing AONB.

Housing needs for all

In February, 2012, the results of a housing survey commissioned by Winchcombe Town Council were published. The housing needs survey for Winchcombe, undertaken by a number of bodies, is out of date and this is where we are facing pressure from developers who are telling us what our needs are!

We face a difficult period defending growth of housing numbers in Winchcombe with all the major plans (Joint Core Strategy and Borough Plan) being behind schedule and leaving a vacuum of definitive indication.

Developers are looking at Winchcombe because it is a nice place to live and property is easy to sell for a very good margin; so we are likely to receive a number of unrequested and unwarranted development proposals whilst this confusion lasts.

!!! STOP PRESS !!!

Very shortly before publication of this newsletter, we learned of the very disturbing news that land behind Delavale Road and Orchard Road was being excavated for an Archaeological survey. This follows a Geophysical survey that was carried out several weeks ago; usually a precursor to a planning application being submitted. Once again our precious AONB is under great threat from speculative developers.

How to join us

<http://www.lovewinchcombe.uk/sign-up.html>