



We care, we inform

Wickford Action Group

People before Profit

What Happened to the Wickford Masterplan?

In November 2005, the residents of Wickford were pleased to be consulted about the proposed Wickford Masterplan, which was going to regenerate and transform the town centre. According to Basildon Council, who organised the consultation, the residents were broadly in favour of the plan, and in April 2006, the Council approved it.

We're now over 3 years on, and look what's happened...

We've got 4 new blocks of 135 flats completed or nearing completion, but where are all the benefits?

Promised benefits

- Wickford re-invented as a lifestyle centre
- Atmosphere of vitality and vibrancy
- Street market
- Café culture
- Creating attractive public spaces

What we got

- 4 multi-story blocks of flats

...we have the flats, but not the benefits!

Let's look at some of the new developments

Riverside Place.

What the consultation offered:

86 residential units with restaurant and offices at ground level.

The builder, Bradgate Developments, director Chelmsford Councillor Ray Ride, has still not paid an agreed £100,000 which was promised for infrastructure improvements when planning permission was granted. It is now over 1 year late and accruing interest. Although the Council should be pursuing this on our behalf, they seem reluctant to do so.

What we got:

173 flats in two blocks. The 7 storey Phase 1 block of 51 flats is nearly complete – Phase 2 to follow.

3-31 Runwell Road, site of Citroen showroom

What the consultation offered:

'High quality northern gateway with 35 townhouses and commercial activity.'

What we got

Empty site at the moment, but 5 storey block of 84 flats with retail outlets at ground level about to go up.

Southern Gateway area (site of Frasier's pub)

What the consultation offered:

'Land use should be focused on the consolidation and development of this area as a location for eating and drinking'.

What we got

A 5 storey block of 36 flats with retail outlets at ground level.

The current situation is that 744 dwellings are in the Masterplan area, including new approved planning applications for 136 flats. There are also the 200 houses at Barn Hall, 50 on the site of the Wickford Town football pitch, and 87 on the site of the Audi showroom near Somerfields, **another 337.**

And if all of the 1,081 houses and flats were built and occupied, there would be over 3,000 more people living in the town, where is the supporting infrastructure, school places, doctors, dentists?

It just isn't good enough.....



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What they said!

- “We undertake to fight further development when it is proposed, without infrastructure being in place for doctors and schools” (Wickford Conservative ECC leaflet May 2009)
- “We will oppose high rise development, too many flats are being built that are not in keeping with the character of the town” (leaflet as above)
- “Barn Hall or Wickford Masterplan? You can’t be against both!” (Basildon Conservative leaflet 2008). We CAN be against both, but we’ve now GOT both, thanks to the present Council!
- “Planning applications have been approved to start the renewal of Wickford Town Centre, including a mini-hospital and a new swimming pool” (Carole Morris’s election leaflet 2007). Where are they??
- “I believe that many of Wickford’s problems result from a failure to develop infrastructure for the existing population, before building extra homes. I would like to see more doctors, dentists, teachers and police in Wickford, together with improvements to our highways” (Carole Morris’s election leaflet 2004 – no comment needed).

What is the Wickford Action Group doing?

- We’ve started a dialog with the new Council leader, Tony Ball, something that wasn’t possible previously, and we are hopeful of working more closely with the council in the future. If you have any questions you would like us to ask Councilor Ball, please contact us and we will bring them up at our next meeting.
- We are supporting the Christmas Lights initiative, and working with the team.
- We monitor the building developments in the area, and keep you informed of some of the things you might otherwise miss.

What have we done?

- The Compulsory Purchase Order taken out by the Council to demolish the Post Office Collection facility is now cancelled following a public petition and objections by the Wickford Action Group and other local objectors.
- We organised and submitted a 1344 signature petition on the Nevendon Road shop redevelopment, and the Council promised a public consultation before any regeneration scheme was implemented. (This is one of the Council’s measures to help fund Basildon’s Sporting Village)
- We have been in discussions with a developer who wants to build a replacement for the London Road Surgery on the site of the old Audi showroom near the Somerfield roundabout, and an outline planning application has been submitted. (This would hopefully replace a previous application for 87 flats on this site). It would also include a building capable of hosting other health facilities, since the Council’s proposal to build a joint medical centre - library - swimming pool on the site of the present pool seems to have hit the buffers, and was an unpopular development in the view of our supporters.



To all our members – **Thank You for your support.**

You can contact us on mail@WickfordActionGroup.org.uk