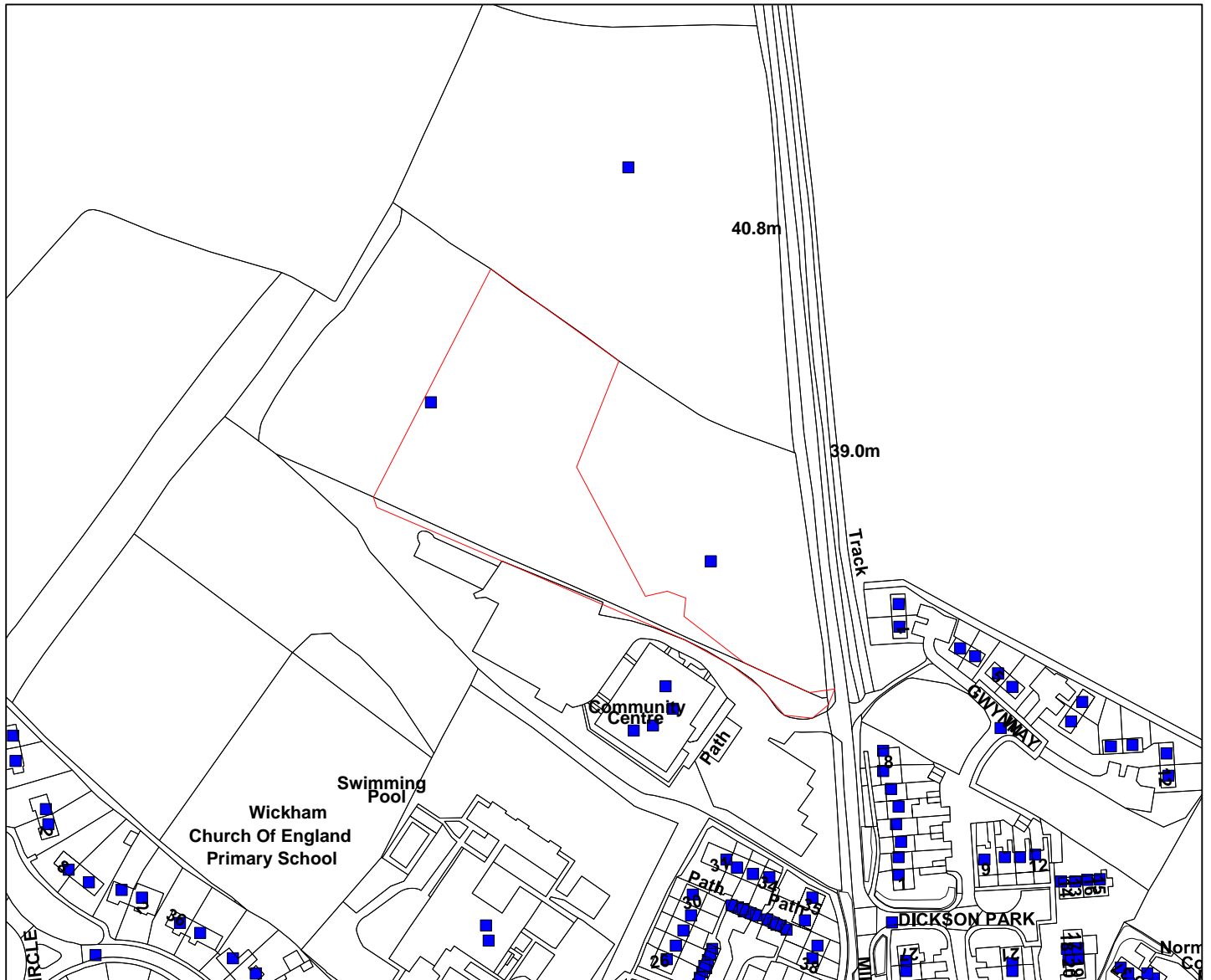


# Field to north of Community Centre, Wickham

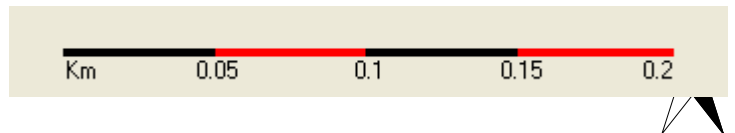


10/00960/FUL



**Legend**

Scale:



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<b>Organisation</b>	Winchester City Council
<b>Department</b>	Development Services
<b>Comments</b>	
<b>Date</b>	14 July 2010
<b>SLA Number</b>	00018301

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**Item No:** 3  
**Case No:** 10/00960/FUL / W00548/12  
**Proposal Description:** Erection of Doctors Surgery (Resubmission)  
**Address:** Field To North Of Community Centre Mill Lane Wickham  
Hampshire  
**Parish:** Wickham  
**Applicants Name:** Wickham Group Surgery  
**Case Officer:** Mr Neil Mackintosh  
**Date Valid:** 13 May 2010  
**Site Factors:** Countryside  
  
**Recommendation:** Application Permitted

### General Comments

This application is reported to the Committee as the Head of Planning Management considers it to be a significant development in the countryside and the recommendation is that permission should be granted.

This is a resubmission of a similar application that was withdrawn earlier this year (ref: 09/02141/FUL). Since then, a number of important additions and changes have been made, including the reduction in size of the building, the provision of additional landscaping and footway, and the submission of a traffic impact assessment and travel plan. In addition, negotiations have been taking place with other interested parties to secure the infrastructure necessary for this and the adjoining site.

Members should also be aware that a planning application (ref:10/01434/FUL) has recently been received in respect of 20 social housing units on the adjacent site

### Site Description

The application site forms the central part of a 2 hectare, arable field to the north of the Wickham Community Centre in Mill Lane.

Mill Lane is a pleasant, tree-lined lane that emerges into the countryside at the point where the vehicular access to the Community Centre has been created. This building is a bulky, two-storey building that has a car park to front and rear. A skateboard park is located behind the centre.

It is proposed that the existing access to the Community Centre will be upgraded to serve the proposed surgery and, if permitted, the 20 social housing units.

The site for the surgery is approximately 0.6 hectares and is bounded to the north and south by hedging. However, there is currently no physical delineation of the eastern and western boundaries. The site slopes gently up from east to west.

### Proposal

It is proposed to erect a 1,187 square metre surgery to replace the existing village

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surgery in Station Road. The surgery will comprise 12 consulting rooms, 3 waiting rooms and facilities for nurses, healthcare assistants and private patients on the ground floor. Part of the building is two-storey and the upper level will contain the administrative and other support functions.

Outside of the building, the site will be landscaped and parking space for 50 cars will be provided.

### Relevant Planning History

**92/00061/OLD (W00548/07)** - Community Centre; construction of vehicular access and car park - Permitted - 22/05/1992.

**09/02141/FUL (W00548/11)** - Erection of doctors' surgery - Withdrawn - 01/02/2010.

**See also 10/01434/FUL (W21852)** - Residential development comprising 9 no. two bedroom, 5 no. three bedroom houses and 4 no. one bedroom, 2 no. two bedroom flats with associated parking and landscaping, land adjoining Wickham Community Centre, Mill Lane, Wickham - Pending Consideration.

### Consultations

#### Engineers: Drainage:

I have doubts concerning the capacity of the foul sewer to accept the flow that this development will generate. However, provided that an upgrade to the pumps in Wickham is undertaken, capacity will be increased sufficiently for the development to go ahead.

#### Engineers: Highways:

Acceptable in principle, subject to various highway conditions and a contribution to the HCC Transport Contributions Scheme (See Highways/Parking section below)  
(Conditions 9 to 13)

#### Landscape Team:

No impact on trees, but unable to support the proposals as they stand. Although the size of the building has been reduced, and pulled away from the boundary, the buffer along the western boundary remains unchanged and more extensive planting is required here. In addition, I would prefer a more uniform approach to provision of car park surfacing materials.

It still remains that the front of the surgery will appear quite hard and requires further softening with larger areas of tree and/or shrub planting. Currently the building will be viewed against a sea of tarmac as you enter the site.

It is also unclear how the applicant wishes to dispose of the material which would be produced when cutting into the slope. Whilst bunding is not encouraged, it would be unsustainable to take the material off site.

*N.B. These matters can be addressed through appropriate conditions requiring further details to be submitted (Conditions 4 & 5).*

#### HCC Ecology:

Considering the nature of the site, I do not have any major concerns. However, it is important that the surrounding hedges, and the woodland to the south and west, are

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protected during building operations, to prevent encroachment and pollution. In addition, lighting should be minimised, to avoid light pollution of the surrounding habitats

Environment Agency:

The Environment Agency has assessed this application as having a low environmental risk.

Southern Water:

Aware that developer is in consultation with Southern Water with regard to upgrading of pumps at the pumping station in the centre of Wickham.

We request, that should this application receive planning approval, it should only be brought into use once the improvement works are completed. (*See Condition 2*)

**Representations**

Wickham Parish Council: Comments

The principle of the new surgery is supported, but concerns are raised that the application is incomplete and no decision should be made until the following are available:

- Proposals to ensure that the existing inadequate sewage system is not compromised further;
- A travel plan to show the expected traffic levels and proposed measures to improve pedestrian and driver safety on surrounding roads as a result in the increase in traffic;
- Drawings to show the height of the building within the existing built environment and surrounding landscape.

No other representations received.

**Relevant Planning Policy**

South East Plan 2009:

The South East Plan was formally revoked on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and therefore no longer forms part of the Development Plan of the District. As a result, its policies are not material to the consideration of planning applications.

Winchester District Local Plan Review (WDLPR):

DP1, DP3, DP4, CE4, CE5, CE11, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5

National Planning Policy Guidance/Statements:

PPS 1 Delivering Sustainable Development  
PPS 7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas  
PPS 9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation  
PPG 13 Transport  
PPS 25 Development and Flood Risk

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Wickham Village Design Statement – endorses the principle of the WDLPR that development should be confined within the existing settlement area, “*seeking above all to maintain the rural nature of the village*”.

Winchester District Landscape Character Assessment

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Other Planning Guidance

Hampshire Biodiversity Action Plan  
Hampshire Parking Strategy and Standards document 2002  
Winchester District Landscape Assessment

**Planning Considerations**

Principle of development

There is a general presumption against new building in the countryside, except in exceptional circumstances where a rural location can be justified in planning terms. For example, proposals relating to agricultural development, homes for agricultural workers, social housing, recreation and tourism, and essential facilities or services.

The latter category includes community facilities and it is on this basis that the proposed doctors' surgery is being considered.

Paragraph 4.9 of the Winchester District Local Plan Review states;

*"In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to locate or expand some facilities or services in the countryside. These may include community or educational facilities, premises for emergency services, or development by statutory undertakers and public utility providers. Each proposal should have special justification and applicants should submit a supporting statement demonstrating a need for the facility and the absence of a suitable site in a settlement. Such development should not prejudice the countryside conservation objectives of the Local Plan."*

Policy CE4 goes on to say:

*"In the countryside, the development of essential facilities and services to serve local communities may exceptionally be permitted where the Local Planning Authority is satisfied that it complies with Policy DP.3 and other relevant policies of this Plan and that:*

- (i) a location on a particular site in the countryside is essential for operational reasons; or*
- (ii) there are no suitable alternative sites for the proposed development within the defined built-up area of the settlement(s) which the development is intended to serve; and*
- (iii) an acceptable landscape scheme is submitted as part of the application.*

In this case, the Wickham Group Surgery has outgrown its current site in Station Road. Although the surgery building has been expanded over the years, it no longer has sufficient space for the operation of a modern medical practice. Car parking on site is very limited.

The applicants have searched extensively for alternative sites within the built-up area of Wickham but have been unsuccessful in identifying a site that would meet their requirements. The creation of satellite surgeries was considered, for example in Knowle, but this idea was dismissed for operational reasons. The owner of land adjacent to the Community Centre has offered it for the purpose of creating an up-to-date community facility to serve Wickham and its surroundings, and this would appear to be the only realistic option at present.

In conclusion, therefore, it is accepted that this proposal, which is intended to provide health facilities and services for Wickham, can be sited in this countryside location, in line with Policy CE.4.

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Design/layout

It is proposed that the building will be traditional in style, with red-multi brickwork and stained timber weather boarding under a plain-tiled clay roof. The roof has been articulated in order to break up its massing. The building will be cut in to the slope of the land.

Externally, the car parking space has been broken into small sections interplanted with trees and shrubs.

Access to the site will be via the existing driveway serving the Community Centre. It will also be shared with the possible social housing site and will be upgraded to satisfy the Highway Engineer.

Impact on character of area and neighbouring property

The siting of this building here, rather than on the site now proposed for social housing, has been the subject of much debate. In the end, it was decided that the scale of a building of this kind would best be sited as far as possible from Mill Lane, to reduce its impact on the landscape. The siting of social housing on the land in between would be on a more domestic scale and would help to screen the massing of the large surgery.

In addition, there is a much-used skate park situated to the rear of the Community Centre. Because of the noise created by such a facility, it was considered most appropriate to site the surgery next to this, rather than housing.

There is no doubt that users of the Community Centre will be aware of the traffic passing to and from the new surgery. However, the two uses should be able to operate side by side and the Community Centre will gain from the improved access and other highway improvements.

Landscape

The impact of the new building on the landscape has been partially dealt with above. From the outset, officers have been aware of the views of the site and its immediate surroundings when travelling south on Mill Lane. Observers look down onto the site and are aware of the large mass of the Community Centre on the edge of the village. Ideally, development located on the edge of the settlement should be scaled down to seamlessly integrate the built form into the surrounding countryside. The Community Centre is not entirely successful in this regard. For this reason, the scheme has been carefully designed to respond positively to its countryside setting. The surgery involves traditional roof forms, with hipped ends, and the height of the roof varies, which helps to break up the building's mass. The building also incorporates other traditional features, such as dormer windows where accommodation is provided at first floor level. The resulting roofscape, although higher, will be far less prominent in the landscape than that of the Community Centre.

However, issues remain regarding the view of the proposed building from Mill Lane and from within the entrance to the site. If the proposed social housing goes ahead, views from Mill Lane will be restricted, but the proposal should be considered as a 'stand alone' development. It is for this reason that conditions are proposed in order to secure a good level of landscaping, the implementation and maintenance of such a scheme and the protection of an existing hedgerow (Conditions 4, 6 & 7).

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Highways/Parking

In summary, the Highways Engineer finds the proposal acceptable in principle, subject to the payment of £17,940.00 in respect of the HCC Transport Contribution Policy, and a number of conditions (Conditions 9 to 13).

With regard to the transport contribution, the local list of highway schemes includes "*accessibility improvements associated with the new surgery in Mill Lane*" and the contribution can be expected to contribute to the cost of such works. These could include, for example, extending the 30mph zone further north, introducing a 'gateway' feature to lower the speed of traffic and providing a pedestrian crossing to Gwynn Way. In calculating the sum required, the Highways Engineer took into account the additional traffic over and above that generated by the current surgery. A Transport Assessment has been submitted by the applicant and it has been carefully studied by the Highways Engineer and has helped to formulate his opinion on the above.

In terms of transport impact, the combined effect of a surgery and 20 social units, in addition to the existing community centre uses, has been taken into account. It is considered that the upgraded access can operate efficiently with minimal queuing and delay.

Adequate visibility splays can be provided at the access to Mill Lane and the realignment and re-levelling of this area will be an improvement for highway safety. Within the site, 50 car parking spaces will be provided, including specialist spaces for those with disabilities or young children. Cycle parking is also to be provided. These facilities are considered adequate by the Highways Engineer.

Other Matters

As this site is on the edge of the countryside, there is the potential for excessive external lighting to be detrimental to the appearance of the site and adversely affect the character of the countryside. In addition, the County Ecologist has highlighted the potential for lighting to adversely impact on the biodiversity of the area. For these reasons, it is proposed to control the external lighting (Condition 8).

The concern expressed about the inadequacy of the existing pumping station to handle additional foul drainage disposal requirements has been addressed through a 'Grampian' type condition, which restricts occupancy of the development until the necessary sewage infrastructure upgrading has been undertaken (Condition 2).

The matters raised by the Wickham Parish Council have been addressed above.

Planning Obligations/Agreements

In seeking the planning obligation and/or financial contribution in respect of the HCC Transport Contributions Policy, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to the tests laid down in Circular 05/2005 which requires the obligations to be necessary; relevant to planning; directly related to the proposed development; fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development and reasonable in all other respects.

**Recommendation**

**Application Permitted, subject to**

**a) The applicant entering into a legal agreement to secure the payment of £17,940.00 in respect of the HCC Transport Contribution Policy.**

**(Note: If the Legal Agreement is not completed within 6 months then the application may be refused without further reference to Committee)**

**and**

**b) The following conditions:**

**Conditions**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 (1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The building hereby permitted shall not be occupied until such time as the Local Planning Authority is satisfied by the receipt of appropriate details in writing, clarifying that the capacity upgrading of the foul water pumping station in Wickham and any related works has been satisfactorily undertaken, so as to cope with the increased flow that the development is likely to generate.

Reason: To avoid the possibility of flooding.

3. No development shall take place until details and samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of the building hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory visual relationship between the new development and its surroundings.

4. No development shall take place until details of both hard and soft landscape works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved. These details shall include the following, as relevant:

- (a) existing and proposed finished levels or contours;
- (b) hard surfacing material;

Soft landscape details shall include the following, as relevant:

- (d) planting plans;
- (e) written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment);



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- (f) schedules of plants, noting species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities, where appropriate;
- (g) implementation and surface water treatment programme.

Reason: To improve the appearance of the site, in the interests of visual amenity, and to ensure a sustainable drainage system.

- 5. No development shall commence until details, including relevant cross sections of the site, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority to show finished floor levels relative to existing and proposed ground levels and any proposals to deal with the relocation / disposal of excavated material. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with such approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the development responds sensitively to the topography of the site.

- 6. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out before the use hereby permitted is commenced and prior to the completion of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed with the Local Planning Authority. If, within a period of five years after planting, any tree or plant is removed, dies or becomes, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged, defective or diseased, another tree or plant of the same species and size as that originally approved shall be planted at the same place, within the next planting season, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscape in accordance with the approved designs.

- 7. The existing hedgerow on the northern boundary of the application site shall be protected during building works by the erection of a continuous chestnut paling fence at least 5 metres from the hedge.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the biodiversity of the area.

- 8. Details of any external lighting to be provided on the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development. The lighting shall be installed, operated and maintained in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the biodiversity of the area.

- 9. Details of provisions to be made for the parking and turning on site of operative and construction vehicles and builders' storage and other facilities during the period of development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and fully implemented before development commences. Such measures shall be retained for the construction period.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety, the operation of the adjoining community site and the biodiversity of the area.

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10. Details of measures to be taken to prevent mud from vehicles leaving the site during construction works being deposited on the public highway shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and fully implemented before development commences. Such measures shall be retained for the duration of the construction period. No lorry shall leave the site unless its wheels have been cleaned sufficiently to prevent mud being carried onto the highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

11. Prior to the completion of development, a cut-off drain shall be provided to prevent the egress of surface water onto the public highway.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

12. The car park shall be constructed, surfaced and marked out in accordance with the approved plan before the development hereby permitted is brought into operation. That area shall not thereafter be used for any purpose other than the parking, loading, unloading and turning of vehicles.

Reason: To ensure that adequate on-site parking and turning facilities are made available.

13. The roads and footways shall be laid out and made up in accordance with the specification, programme and details to be approved by the Local Planning Authority. No building erected on the land shall be occupied until there is a direct connection from it to Mill Lane, completed to the approved specification.

Reason: To ensure that the roads and footways are constructed to a satisfactory standard.

## **Informatives**

1. This permission is granted for the following reason:

The development is in accordance with the policies and proposals of the Development Plan set out below, and other material considerations do not have sufficient weight to justify a refusal of the application. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning permission should therefore be granted.

2. The Local Planning Authority has taken account of the following Development Plan policies and proposals:

Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006:  
DP1, DP3, DP4, CE4, CE5, CE11, T1, T2, T3, T4, T5.