

The most recent WNP leaflet, posted through your door in the last few days, is biased and is designed to encourage you to choose Option A.

The WNP is becoming more and more secretive with no publicly accessible records of any meetings held during the last several months.

It is clear that "Option A" is the desired outcome for the Marlbrook residents who now control your neighbourhood plan. **But the majority of Watlington's community has already said it wants to reduce traffic and increase safety in the town centre by using new housing development to create an alternative traffic route to reduce traffic in the town centre.**

Questions you need to ask:

Why does the new WNP committee have no traffic strategy, when "Traffic" is the single most important issue to Watlington residents? Why does WNP not think this is fundamental to deciding where new housing should go?

Why are there no records of recent WNP meetings when this is a legal requirement? What does WNP *not* want you to know about?

Why has a road connection to Willow Close been specifically omitted from site options when this route option was a clear favourite in Consultation 2? Does WNP accept that this will result in even more houses being required to create the alternative route residents want?

Why is the WNP leaflet composed so as to lead respondents to think Option A "Pepperpot option" sounds the "best"?

Just what *are* WNP's plans for "effective ways to manage traffic through the town centre"? And just how can this be decided if there is no traffic strategy?

What is the need to ask, again, if the community wants a "pepperpot" approach when this has already been consulted on and the answer was "No"?

Are you going to stand up for what the majority of the community has already said it wants? Your voice needs to be heard now:

Have your say 11th - 15th June.

Are you being hoodwinked by

Watlington  ??
Neighbourhood Plan

Did you know that since May 2015, Watlington's neighbourhood plan has been led by residents of Watlington's Marlbrook Estate who's stated objective is to prevent development which will impact their own homes?

No?

Then you need to read this leaflet...

Did you know...

In 2014 and early in 2015, the previous WNP committee conducted two public consultations⁽¹⁾:

- * Consultation 1: **83% of respondents said "Traffic & environment" were either "Vital" or "Very" important. "Traffic & environment" was considered the most important issue** out of a list of 5 issues. Housing was rated least important on the same list.
- * Consultation 1 conclusion: **Any new housing in Watlington should be used to reduce traffic in the town centre.**

* In Consultation 2, the question that is now being asked by the *current* WNP committee was explored in depth. There were not two options, but several, including the "Pepperpot" option as well as three "alternative route" options. The "Pepperpot" option is the same as the current "Option A" (ie "spread" development on lots of little sites around town) being asked in this month's Neighbourhood Plan "information gathering event".

* Consultation 2 conclusion: **59% of respondents said they wanted to use housing to provide an alternative route to reduce all traffic** through the centre of Watlington. Some **80% reported that this route should also be used to take heavy lorries too.**

* Consultation 2 conclusion: **The most popular "alternative route" option was one to connect Pyrton Lane to Willow Close** in the Marlbrook Estate; a road which was built specifically for this purpose in 1986, and to connect the **Industrial estate on Cuxham Road to Britwell Road**. This route also needed the lowest number of new houses to be built.

* **In the current options being considered, the option to connect onto Willow Close has been removed**, and the "string of sites" WNP refers to in its leaflet includes an *additional* site in order to build yet another section of road, with more houses, in order to by-pass Marlbrook Estate!

* It was because **Marlbrook Estate residents didn't like the outcome of Consultation 2** that they took control of your neighbourhood plan, and **why they are now asking the same question again to see if they can get a different answer. They have also disposed of the transport strategy developed by the previous WNP committee based on consultation response and advice from transport consultants.**

Do not be complacent; housing developers are queuing up to develop sites in and around Watlington. With SODC recently having to admit that it does not have a 5-year housing land supply, there will be little restriction to the number of houses built around Watlington. Look at what has already been permitted in Chinnor and Benson.

In 2009, even before Oxford City successfully argued that SODC should take some of its housing allocation in addition to its own, traffic flows through Watlington were predicted to increase by between 10% and 20% over the next 15 years due to additional development *elsewhere* in South Oxfordshire⁽²⁾. That's not even including *Watlington's* allocated development!

The "Do Nothing" approach of pepperpotting development sites is **not** an option. There *are* NO "effective ways to manage traffic through the town centre" which haven't already been tried and which have not already spectacularly failed to achieve a reduction in traffic levels.

In their leaflet, the current WNP committee says it will require "many more than 200 new homes to pay" for an alternative route. However, housing developers say that they "have to pay for an access road through an estate anyway, why not connect this up at both ends to make a through-route?" So it will **not** necessarily require more housing to achieve this. But new housing *should* be required to give something back to the community, and an alternative route would achieve this.

SODC considers that the sites between Pyrton Lane and Marlbrook Estate, and between the industrial estate and Britwell Road, are eminently developable. In the recent SODC consultation "A Low Emissions Strategy For South Oxfordshire"⁽³⁾ on page 20, SODC says that housing development around Watlington should be used to procure a new alternative route. These sites are not in flood plain and not in the AONB, and can provide the shortest, most efficient road to connect across Watlington, thus they are likely to be supported by SODC for development anyway.

If the current Option A "Pepperpot" approach is adopted by WNP in order to try to avoid development adjacent to Willow Close, Watlington is likely to be seen by both developers and SODC to be publicly giving its support for sites to be developed *in addition* to the Pyrton Lane and Britwell Road sites. In which case, there really will be "many more than 200 new homes" built, and these will be *all around* Watlington!

(1) Consultation 1 and 2 results can be found on the Watlington Neighbourhood Plan website: www.watlingtonnp.org.uk

(2) Evaluation of the transport impacts associated with development options in South Oxfordshire, Halcrow Group Ltd for SODC, 5/11/2009.
(3) A Low Emissions Strategy for South Oxfordshire - Ricardo Energy & Environment for SODC, 24/09/2015