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MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Teresa Strange

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Melksham Community Campus,
Market Place, Melksham,
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
Tel: 01225 705700

Email: clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk
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Monday 16th February 2026

To all members of the Council Planning Committee: Councillors Richard Wood, Alan Baines, David Pafford (Vice-Chair of Council), John Glover (Chair of Council), Mark Harris, Peter Richardson and Martin Franks

You are summoned to attend the Planning Committee Meeting which will be held on **Monday 23rd February 2026 at 7.00pm at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES** to consider the agenda below:

**TO ACCESS THE MEETING REMOTELY, PLEASE FOLLOW THE ZOOM LINK BELOW.
THE LINK WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE WHEN IT GOES
LIVE SHORTLY BEFORE 7PM.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2791815985?pwd=Y2x5T25DRIVWVU54UW1YWWE4NkNrZz09&omn=89085343194>

Or go to www.zoom.us or Phone 0131 4601196 and enter: **Meeting ID: 279 181 5985
Passcode: 070920**. Instructions on how to access Zoom are on the parish council website www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk. If you have difficulties accessing the meeting please call (do not text) the out of hours mobile: 07341 474234

YOU CAN ACCESS THE AGENDA PACK HERE

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa Strange".

Teresa Strange, Clerk



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AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**
2. **To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
 - a. To receive Declarations of Interest.
 - b. To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered.
4. **To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature**

Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda items where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
5. **Public Participation**
6. **To consider the following new Planning Applications**, including Permission in Principle applications received within the required timeframe (14 days):
 - a. **PL/2026/00520 - 42 Westlands Lane, Beanacre, Melksham, SN12 7QE.**
Householder planning permission New single storey side and rear extension, and first floor extension. Applicant name: Mr and Mrs Rich. **Comments by: 26th February 2026**
 - b. **PL/2026/00576 - 39 Sunderland Close, Bowerhill, Melksham, SN12 6TZ.**
Householder planning permission Proposed Two Storey Rear & Single Storey Side Extensions & Landscaping of Garden. Applicant name: Mr & Mrs Hunt. **Comments by: 27th February 2026**
 - c. **PL/2026/00665 - Mavern House, Corsham Road, Shaw, Melksham, SN12 8EH.**
Full planning permission - Single Storey Extension forming an ensuite bedroom. Applicant name: Mr Peter Madern **Comments by: 5th March 2026**
 - d. **PL/2026/00489 - 172 Littleworth Lane, Whitley, Melksham, SN12 8RF.**
Householder planning permission - 2 storey extension and associated external works. Applicant name: Hollie & Michael Whittle & Pearce. **Comments by: 6th March 2026**
 - e. **PL/2026/00767 - 89 Corsham Road, Whitley, Melksham, SN12 8QF.**
Removal/variation of conditions - Variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) relating to application PL/2025/03261. Applicant name: Nathan Hall. **Comments by: 10th March 2026**
7. **Amended Plans/Additional Information:** To comment on any revised/amended plans/additional information on planning applications received within the required timeframe (14 days).

8. **Current planning applications:** Standing item for issues/queries arising during period of applications awaiting decision.

a. **PL/2024/10345 (FULL) & PL/2025/09780 (OUT) Land north of the A3102, Melksham (New Road Farm)**

The construction of 295 homes; public open space, including formal play space and allotments; sustainable drainage systems; and associated infrastructure; with 0.4ha of land safeguarded for a nursery. The principal point of access is to be provided from a new northern arm on the existing Eastern Way/A3102 roundabout junction, with a secondary access onto the A3102. Additional access points are proposed for pedestrians and cyclists. Applicant: Bloor Homes South West

- To note the date & time of the meeting planned with the developer (Bloor)

c. **PL/2025/06749 - Land North of Bath Road (A365), Melksham (Adjacent to Melksham Oak Community School)**

Outline planning application (with all matters except access reserved) for mixed use development comprising residential (up to 205 dwellings), land reserved for expansion of secondary school, public open space, landscaping and associated engineering works. Applicant Name: Hannick Homes & Developments Ltd

- To receive feedback from the meeting with the developer (Hannick) held on 11th February 2026 and to approve the notes (if available)

d. **PL/2025/06105 Land at Bowerhill Lane, Bowerhill, Melksham (Old Loves Farm)**

Outline Planning Permission: Erection of up to 50 No. dwellings and associated works

- To note new Archaeological evaluation report and comment

e. **PL/2024/11426: Land to the South of A365 Bath Road and West of Turnpike Garage, Melksham, Wilts (Gompels):** Outline planning permission: All matters reserved. Construction of warehouse with office space, parking and associated landscaping including site access.

- To note Further response from applicant re Public Protection comments
- To consider if the parish council will provide representation at a future Wiltshire Council Strategic/Western Area Planning Committee meeting for the Gompels Warehouse planning application (PL/2024/11426)

f. **PL/2025/07391 - Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wiltshire**

Approval of reserved matters: Reserved Matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for 210 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), along with associated open space, landscaping, and parking, pursuant to Condition 2 of Outline Planning Permission ref. PL/2022/08504. Applicant Name: BWD Trading

- No new documents or comments

g. **PL/2025/00626 Land North of Berryfield Lane, Melksham, SN12 6DT:** Outline planning application for up to 68 dwellings and formation of new access and associated works (All matters reserved other than access).

- To note new comment from Drainage

h. **PL/2024/09725 Land off Corsham Road, Whitley, Melksham (Middle Farm)**

Outline planning application (with access, layout and landscaping to be approved)

for up to 22 dwellings, new access off Corsham Road, public open space, drainage and associated works.

- To note new comments from Highways.
- To note latest correspondence

9. Proposed Energy Installations

- a. Lime Down Solar
 - To consider the letter from the Examining Authority that has been published on the National Infrastructure Planning website, including details of the preliminary meeting (Tuesday 21 April 2026 10am) and Open Floor Hearing 1 (Tuesday 21 April 2026 2pm).
- b. Cable Route for Norrington Spring Park Project (Aureos for SSEN Distribution) and Studley Solar Farm (DNOC for Verdant Energy)
 - To note approval of planning application PL/2025/05856 for the laying of underground electricity cables in association with Wick Solar Farm (LPA Reference: 20/06840/FUL) and Studley Solar Farm (LPA Reference: PL/2021/08690)
 - To note the date & time of the meeting planned with Aureos.
 - To note updated website address: <https://www.ssen.co.uk/about-ssen/our-works/melksham-to-norrington/>
- c. **PL/2025/05552 Land South of Brockleaze, Neston, Corsham, SN13 9TE.** Full planning permission: Battery Energy Storage System with associated infrastructure.
 - To consider comments submitted by Community Action Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) Brockleaze Addendum 6 (submitted 7th February 2026)
- d. To receive an update on Wiltshire Council Engagement about Cumulative Impact.
 - Response from Highways
 - Meeting feedback with Planning Cabinet member held on 16th February 2026
- e. Future Energy Landscapes
 - To consider attendance at community energy workshop for Staverton, Hilperton, **Semington** and Great Hinton Semington on Tuesday 17th March 2026 from 6 pm to 8:30 pm
 - To note response to Corsham Future Energy Landscapes consultation

10. Planning Policy:

- a. **Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP):**
 - To reflect on responses to planning applications and recent appeal for future review of the Neighbourhood Plan (standing item)
- b. **Wiltshire Council's Draft Local Plan Examination:** To consider any updates <https://www.localplanservices.co.uk/wiltshirelpexamination>
- c. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

- To consider response to consultation on changes to NPPF - deadline of 10th March 2026.

11. Premises Licenses applications and decisions:

12. Appeals

- a. To note appeal decisions (if determined)
- b. To note changes to the Planning Appeal process from 1st April 2026

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-appeals-procedural-guide-for-appeals-relating-to-applications-dated-on-or-after-1-april-2026#:~:text=Most%20appeals%20made%20in%20relation,when%20they%20terminated%20the%20application.>

13. Planning Enforcement: To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.

14. S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (*Standing Item*)

- a. **Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements**
 - i. Pathfinder Place
 - ii. To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers
- b. **Contact with developers:**
 - i. To receive update on progress on Neighbourhood Plan allocation for the former Library site

Copy to all Councillors

Announcements

Clerk's Note:

To note mainly 1 & 2 bedrooms, brownfield site, and considered unviable for Affordable Housing. Support from Wiltshire Council Economic Development team.

Green light for 200-home Chippenham shopping centre revamp

Article in Housing Today 16 February 2026

Acorn Property Group's £50m scheme passed despite concerns reduced retail and leisure space would harm local economy

Plans to transform Emery Gate Shopping Centre in Chippenham into 225 new homes have been approved by Wiltshire Council.



Source: HNW Architects

CGI image of Chippenham Riverside

Developer Acorn Property Group's £50m "Chippenham Riverside" scheme will deliver a mixed-use neighbourhood reconnecting the High Street with Island Park and the River Avon.

Designed by HNW Architects, the masterplan includes a series of seven new buildings with landscaped outdoor parades, squares, mews and terraces over the existing refurbished subterranean car park.

There would be 102 one-bedroom, 115 two-bedroom and eight three-bedroom dwellings, all for open market sale.

A viability assessment deemed the provision of any affordable housing units unviable, with the council approving the regeneration based on its wider benefits, such as the redevelopment of a major brownfield site, 4,000sqm of new commercial and community floorspace and public realm improvements.

A planning application was originally lodged in 2024, but the scheme was called in for scrutiny in January 2026 following concerns raised by a councillor that “the proposed number of retail and leisure units is below what our community needs [...] which would force several existing businesses to close”.

Liz Alstrom, Wiltshire councillor for Chippenham argued that “this would not only harm the vitality of our high street but also result in a loss of local jobs and economic activity.”

She called for an increase in the scheme’s leisure and commercial floorspace provision, but planning officers ultimately disagreed that the reduction would harm the town centre.

Lee Davies, director at HNW Architects, said: “Emery Gate is one of those sites that really matters. It sits between the High Street, the river and the park, yet for years it has turned its back on all three.

“This approval recognises the opportunity to do something fundamentally better – to repair the townscape, open up the riverside and create a piece of Chippenham that works throughout the day and into the evening... Chippenham Riverside is well placed to act as a catalyst for wider regeneration.”

Economy and Regeneration Consultation Response - SUPPORT

PL/2024/11661 – Emery Gate Shopping Centre, Emery Lane, Chippenham

The Economy and Regeneration service submit the following response in support of the application for a mixed used development comprising 225 new homes, c.4000sqm of commercial floor space, and 305 vehicle parking spaces across the Emery Gate site. The development will support and promote significant regeneration in the centre of Chippenham, identified in policy as an opportunity area, and successfully utilising the existing assets in the town centre to improve the retail, housing and commercial provisions to meet demand.

Chippenham Avon Project Masterplan

The proposed development at the Emery Gate Shopping Centre conforms with the objectives adopted in the Chippenham Avon Project Masterplan¹ (2024), to include *‘Enabling and encouraging growth and regeneration within central Chippenham including creating more active frontages at the Emery Gate Shopping Centre and 31-33 High Street in line with the draft Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan’*, *‘Increasing the functional connection of Chippenham to the river’*, *‘Supporting development that is responsive to the river corridor’*, *‘Creating 250+ jobs and increasing confidence for investment from others in the town centre’* and *‘Removing visually obtrusive structures’*. Within the masterplan, Emery Gate relates to ‘Reach 3’ of the document, with the proposals fully aligned with the documents aspirations for creating a more active river frontage, improvement of the links between the town centre and the river, creation of a river facing shopping experience with terraced seating, food and beverage offerings, and an improved public realm by which the river becomes a focal point.

Chippenham One Plan

The Emery Gate Shopping Centre and River Frontage was identified in the Chippenham One Plan² (2024) as a significant opportunity for Chippenham Town Centre, which was well-supported during public consultation. The One Plan advocates for the enhancement of this area, with facades reimagined to create an active river frontage that facilitates food, beverage, and leisure, accommodating café culture and redefining Chippenham as a destination with a successful public realm. This application fully supports the adopted policy for Chippenham, facilitating the approach set out to address the existing challenges faced by the Town Centre and river frontage across Monkton Park. The Town Centre Partnership Board, as noted in the One Plan, advocates for the area identified in the application to be enhanced and improved. The application

¹ Produced by The Chippenham Town Centre Partnership Board, consultation conducted March-May 2024, formally endorsed by Cabinet 8th October 2024.

² Produced by The Chippenham Town Centre Partnership Board, consultation conducted April-June 2023, formally endorsed by Cabinet 8th October 2024.

meets the aims and objectives of the suite of Development Plans for Chippenham, and as such will support economic growth of the town into the future.

The Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan

The proposal aligns with the objectives and policies in the adopted Chippenham Neighbourhood Plan³ (2024), to include: HO4, HO6, TC2 – Design Principles A, B, C, and D, TC4 and TC6. The plan notes that the economy in Chippenham has reached a critical point, and as such proposals that support the Town Centre Vision of reviving the town centre, serving as a centre for community activity, sub-regional public services, promoting the town as a visitor destination, and encouraging the distinctive identity of the town centre should be encouraged. The proposed redevelopment of the Emery Gate Shopping Centre responds to the challenges faced by the currently declining retail centre and introduces additional residential provision which the town is in need of. The mixed-use development will support the aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

Chippenham is identified in the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) (2015) CP1, as a Principal Settlement. A strategically important centre and primary focus for development, it states that it should be safeguarded and enhanced for its strategic role as employment and service centres. The proposed development would enhance Chippenham's provision of both employment and residential offerings, supporting its strategic role within Wiltshire. The local amenities and transport links advocate for mixed-use development in this central location, improving the current town centre and supporting future economic growth. Principal settlements are identified as providing significant levels of jobs and homes, together with supporting community facilities and infrastructure, meeting their economic potential in the most sustainable ways to support better self-containment. The Emery Gate redevelopment would allow Chippenham to make better use of the riverside by connecting the proposed riverside terrace (Park Terrace) to Island Park, it would improve visual amenity and footfall in the area, and subsequently promote economic potential in the town, supporting better self-containment, as supported in the WCS.

The WCS, in CP9, supports development of the Chippenham Central Area for mixed use schemes incorporating high quality design standards, demonstrating a contribution to enhancing the river as an attractive feature of the development, providing improved pedestrian and cycle routes, public open space and active riverside frontages. It also states that all proposals should establish appropriate high quality public realm and pedestrian and cycle routes to create a lively visual and social environment, focussed on linking all parts of the town with its centre. The proposed development would

³ Produced by Chippenham Town Council, consultation conducted February-April 2023, adopted 29th May 2024.

support regeneration of the riverside area, and from the plans and design statements, it is evident that the redevelopment is of a high quality, and as such will improve the public realm, create a strengthened retail centre, and improve open space within the town centre. This also aligns with section 7 of the NPPF, ensuring the vitality of town centres.

Regeneration of brownfield sites, in CP36 of the WCS, will be supported in Principal Settlements where the proposed uses help to deliver the overall strategy for that settlement and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre. The Emery Gate redevelopment supports this policy, and will advocate for wider improvements throughout Chippenham, supporting broader town centre regeneration whilst improving the existing retail provision and meeting increasing demand for residential dwellings. The proposed development draws on the local context, maintaining a consistent shopfront style through the retail areas, in keeping with the existing retail units on the High Street and within the locality. The Design and Access statement explores the character areas, ensuring the scheme responds positively to existing facades, creating a continuity of materials and elevations throughout the development. Although the increased mass and height of the buildings within Emery Gate will change to the views into the Town Centre from across Monkton Park, the established trees obscure views to the south, and will partially screen the development when built. Designed to frame views of the church spire, the arrangement of the buildings enhances views into the town centre and responds positively and sympathetically to the topography of the site. The development will integrate with Monkton Park and Island Park, encouraging increased use of the park for commercial, socialising and leisure uses. As the site falls within the Conservation Area, it is important that the development positively responds, protects and conserves the historic and landscape environments, which has been achieved through sympathetic design, consistency of materials, and specialist involvement from the outset.

Pre-Application Engagement

The proposal on the existing brownfield site is a significant and transformational opportunity for Chippenham, providing the Town Centre with a scheme that will promote economic growth, central housing development in line with demand, create access from the town centre to the riverside area and Island Park, and utilise active frontages to encourage footfall throughout.

The Major Projects team have been involved in pre-application discussions relating to the Emery Gate site since March 2023. Our ongoing involvement has given us a thorough understanding of the site, and the proposed development, which has been through many iterative processes to reach the final scheme. A series of themed ‘roundtable’ meetings were held with Wiltshire Council internal specialist officers to include drainage and flooding; natural environment; highways and transport; historic

environment; landscape; public rights of way; public open spaces; environmental protection and climate. Within these meetings, the concerns and challenges raised by officers were discussed with the applicant and their consultants. This feedback throughout the early design stages has allowed early mitigation and adaptation of the scheme in response to officer comments, such as where concerns were raised in a meeting around how the increased scale and massing of buildings could dominate long views, potentially harming the town's historic perception. The applicant responded to this by modifying and adjusting the massing to avoid creating a canyon along the river corridor, and the elevations and roofscapes fronting the park edge were further developed to provide additional relief to longer stretches. The massing of building E, initially set at 5 storeys, was raised as a concern by the urban design team in a roundtable meeting and was subsequently reduced in height to mirror the other proposed buildings. The conversations facilitated in these pre-application meetings have allowed the applicant to mitigate concerns and respond positively to early discussions, ensuring the scheme meets the expectations of officers who will be consulting on the formal application.

The proposal responds well to the demands of the town, the shortfalls and challenges it currently faces, and the potential of the adjacent River Avon. The involvement with officers prior to application submission has addressed concerns and queries, and as such, Major Projects are supportive of approval of the proposal and raise no objections to the application.

Economic Context

The redevelopment of Emery Gate and the Chippenham Riverside area is consistent with the Swindon and Wiltshire Economic Strategy⁴ (2025-36, and the site has long been included within the list of capital schemes to progress across Wiltshire. The redevelopment of Emery Gate will support the future development of Chippenham and is consistent with the economic regeneration plans for the settlement. Specifically, the strategy supports:

Place-shaping - (Making places work) Deliver vibrant communities through the regeneration and renewal of town centres and commercial areas, creating new employment opportunities and attracting younger people to live and work in our area. In terms of the Emery Gate redevelopment specifically, economic priorities identified in the strategy include:

Town centre investment - regenerate sites which are vacant or no longer fit for purpose and attract investment which creates new, good quality, employment opportunities.

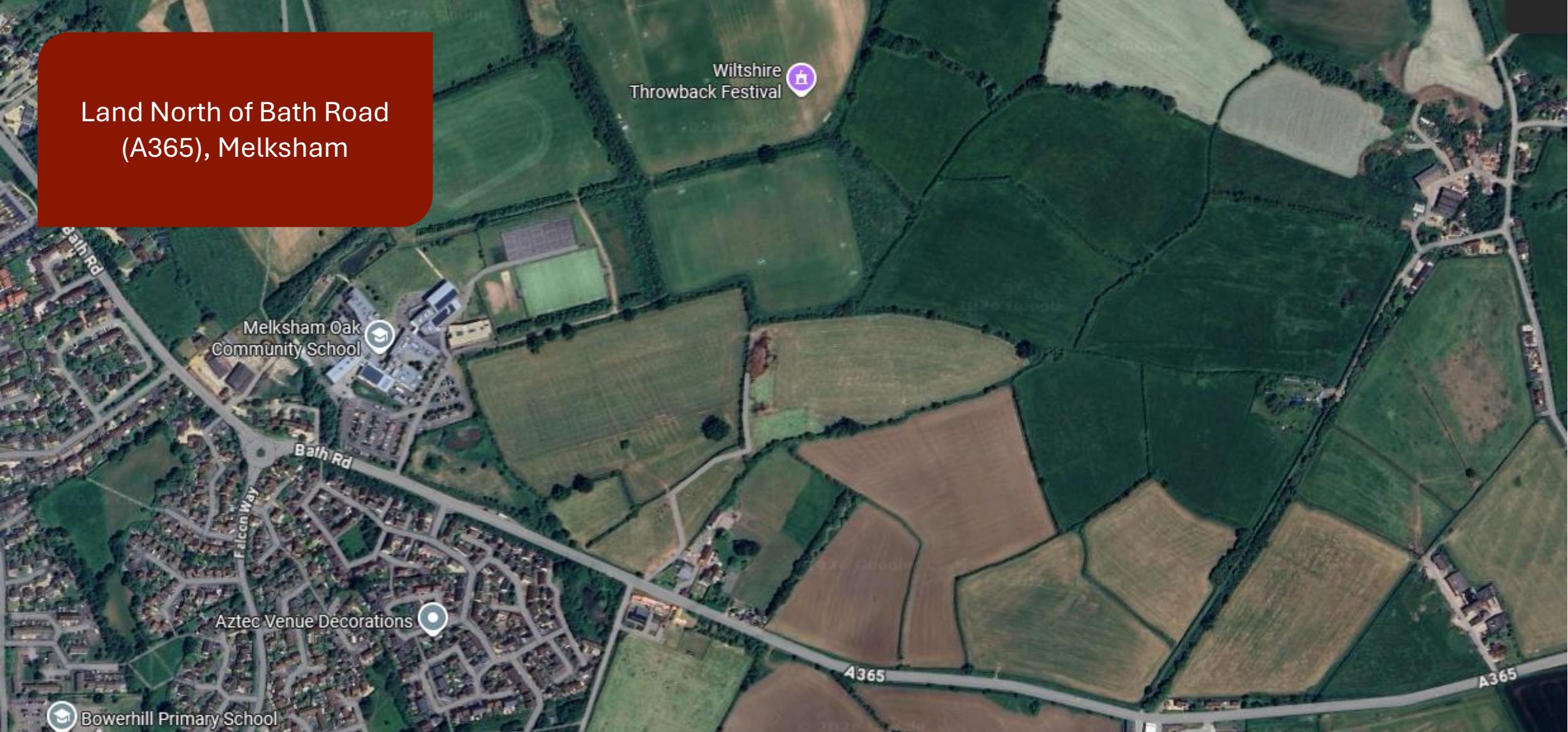
Revitalise high streets - enhance the attractiveness of our places by developing a broader retail and night-time offering, alongside enabling greater town centre living and inclusion, which is supported by active travel plans.

⁴ Swindon and Wiltshire Economic Strategy 2025-2036 adopted 4th February 2025.

Conclusion

This application provides a transformational opportunity for the regeneration of Chippenham, securing its long-term vitality and viability, supporting future economic growth, and wider town centre regeneration, which is essential for its ongoing prosperity. The proposal will help revitalise the town centre, creating a high-quality public realm, with a flexible commercial provision and dynamic frontages that can adapt to future demand. The proposal is supported by all relevant adopted policy guidance, and as such is fully supported by the Economy and Regeneration service.

Land North of Bath Road
(A365), Melksham



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Introduction

- Parish Council meeting held on Tuesday 6 May 2025
- Community consultation event held on Monday 16 June 2025
- Planning application validated on 29 August 2025 (PL/2025/06749)
- Around 30 consultation responses received
- Meeting with councillors held on Wednesday 11 February 2026



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Planning Application

- Outline application for up to 205 homes, with access fixed and all other matters reserved
- Land set aside for future expansion of Melksham Oak Community School
- New site access from Bath Road, plus improved walking and cycling links including a new crossing
- Green infrastructure including public open space, landscaping and play provision
- Key commitments include affordable housing subject to viability, SuDS drainage and at least 10% biodiversity net gain



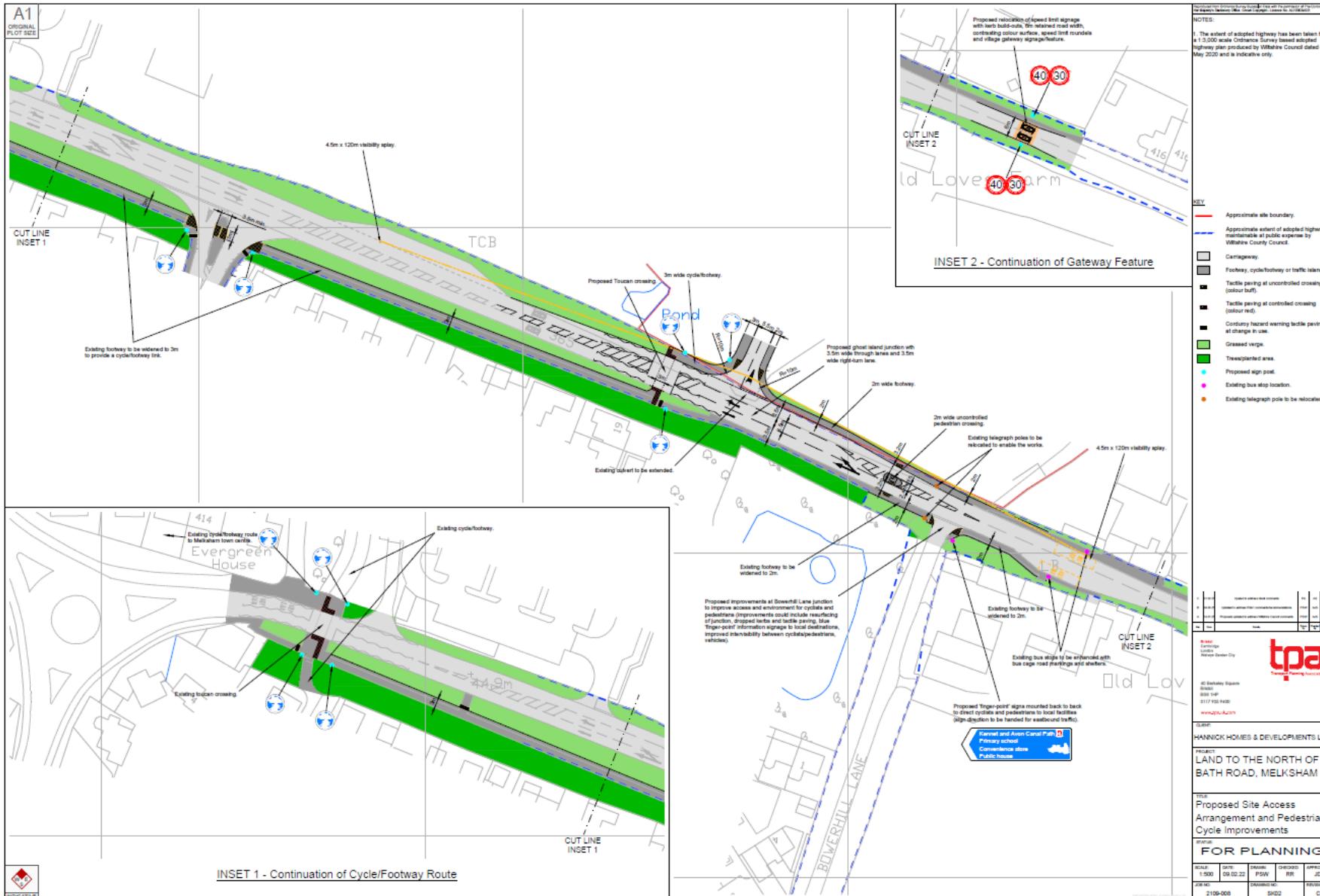
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AGENDA ITEM 08c Melksham Parish Council Presentation 11022026

Hannick
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AGENDA ITEM 08c Melksham Parish Council Presentation 11022026

Hannick DEVELOPMENTS





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AGENDA ITEM C8c Melksham Parish Council Presentation 11022026

Hannick 
DEVELOPMENTS

Consultation Responses

- **Access and traffic:** Bath Road access, design and wider road safety.
- **Amenity:** Noise assessment and mitigation (road traffic and plant).
- **Infrastructure:** Requests for developer funding (waste provision and other local facilities).
- **Design and landscape:** Green infrastructure and landscaping, with affordable mix noted.
- **Process:** Application called in to committee - highway and environmental concerns.

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Next Steps

- Ongoing liaison with Wiltshire Highways with regards to site access arrangement
- Additional surface water modelling information to be submitted, as requested by Wiltshire Council
- Urban design feedback to be addressed once the access solution is confirmed

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AGENDA ITEM 08c Melksham Parish Council Presentation 11022026

Hannick
DEVELOPMENTS

Teresa Strange

From: Rivans, Natalie <Natalie.Rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 February 2026 13:24
To: Teresa Strange
Subject: RE: ENF/2026/00084 _Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

Thanks, helpful as always.

I have spoken to Charlotte, who explained further trenching is required as a continuation of the investigation works to find the rising main on site – this work will be carrying on until the end of the week.

Andy Thompson has been briefed on everything, and she assures me that the ground workers are under strict and clear instructions to remediate everything and leave the road clear of all mud and debris.

Happy to follow up early next week if this is still ongoing.

Natalie

Natalie Rivans
Planning Enforcement Officer
Planning Enforcement Team

Wiltshire Council

External Tel: 01225 770502
E-mail: natalie.rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk
Website: www.wiltshire.gov.uk
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From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 February 2026 12:15
To: Rivans, Natalie <Natalie.Rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: ENF/2026/00084 _Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

Me again, this might be useful, photos of the digger on site.

I know you have trouble receiving photos, so had dropped into a pdf.

Taken this morning,

From: Rivans, Natalie <Natalie.Rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 February 2026 09:52
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: ENF/2026/00084 _Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

I'll head back and find out more!

Natalie Rivans

Planning Enforcement Officer
Planning Enforcement Team

Wiltshire Council

External Tel: 01225 770502

E-mail: natalie.rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk

Website: www.wiltshire.gov.uk

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From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>

Sent: 04 February 2026 09:39

To: Rivans, Natalie <Natalie.Rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: ENF/2026/00084 _Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

Good Morning Natalie..... Guess what arrived this morning?! 😊



From: Rivans, Natalie <Natalie.Rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 04 February 2026 08:30
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: ENF/2026/00084 _Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

Hi Teresa

I believe the mud has now been cleared, and I believe trenching has been completed so there should be no further incidences.

Best wishes

Natalie Rivans
Planning Enforcement Officer
Planning Enforcement Team

Wiltshire Council

External Tel: 01225 770502
E-mail: natalie.rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk
Website: www.wiltshire.gov.uk
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From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 January 2026 11:34
To: Rivans, Natalie <Natalie.Rivans@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Cc: Fiona Dey <office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: ENF/2026/00084 _Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

Hi Natalie

This is the latest I have had on this ENF/2026/00084 refers.

All the best, Teresa

From: Counsell, Charlotte <Charlotte.Counsell@barrathomes.co.uk>
Sent: 28 January 2026 16:26
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>; Matthew Roberts <matthew.roberts@jbp.co.uk>
Cc: Fiona Dey <office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>; Sims, Steven <steven.sims@wiltshire.gov.uk>; Jones, Hannah <hannah.jones@wiltshire.gov.uk>; nick.holder@wiltshire.gov.uk
Subject: FW: *EXTERNAL:RE: A503_Melksham_Reserved Matters at Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wilts

Hi Teresa,

Thank you all for your time yesterday.

For Natalie Rivans, Planning Enforcement ENF/2026/00084

On the Land south of Western Way site, Weds 4th February 2026







AGENDA ITEM 08f Photos of on site work Land south of Western Way Weds 4th Feb 26











From: NI Mail Distribution <ni.mail.distribution@notifications.service.gov.uk>
Sent: 09 February 2026 13:19
To: Fiona Dey
Subject: EN010168 – Lime Down Solar Project

Categories: Planning



Planning Inspectorate

Application by Lime Down Solar Park Limited for an order granting development consent for the Lime Down Solar Project

**Planning Act 2008 – section 88 and 89 and
The Infrastructure Planning (Examination
Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rules 6, 9 and 13**

**Invitation to the preliminary meeting,
notification of hearings and other
procedural decisions**

Interested Party Reference number:

F1D12E714

(You must quote your Interested Party Reference number in all correspondence with the Planning Inspectorate).

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find below a link to a letter from the Examining Authority (ExA) that has been published on the National Infrastructure Planning website.

The letter is an invitation to the preliminary meeting for the above application (the 'Rule 6' letter) which will be held at Neeld Community & Arts Centre, Borough Parade, Chippenham, SN15 3WL or virtually via Microsoft Teams. The letter includes an agenda for the meeting, a draft examination timetable and other important matters.

- Tuesday 21 April 2026, 10:00am – preliminary meeting

The letter also provides notification of the following events at Neeld Community & Arts Centre, Borough Parade, Chippenham, SN15 3WL or virtually via Microsoft Teams:

- Tuesday 21 April 2026, 2:00pm – open floor hearing 1 (OFH1)
- Wednesday 22 April 2026, 10:00am – issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)

The letter also includes details about how to make a request to be heard and the procedure that will be followed at the hearings.

<https://nsip-documents.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/published-documents/EN010168-000871-LD%20Rule%206%20Letter%20Final.pdf>

You can also view the letter on the Documents page on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website:

<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010168>

You can also choose to follow the application process through additional notifications send via email from our website Get updates | Lime Down Solar Project

Yours faithfully

Lime Down Solar Case Team
National Infrastructure Planning

Helpline: 0303 444 5000

Email: limedown@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Web: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/> (National Infrastructure Planning)

Web: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate (The Planning Inspectorate)

X (formerly known as Twitter): @PINSgov

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<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/help/privacy-and-cookie/>



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69 Buckingham Avenue
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SL1 4PN

Customer
Services: 0303 444 5000
email: limedown@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

All interested parties, statutory parties and
any other person invited to the preliminary
meeting

Our Ref: EN010168

Date: **9 February 2026**

Dear Recipient

**Planning Act 2008 – section 88 and 89 and The Infrastructure Planning
(Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rules 6, 9 and 13**

**Application by Lime Down Solar Park Limited for an order granting
development consent for the Lime Down Solar Project**

**Invitation to the preliminary meeting, notification of hearings and other
procedural decisions**

Following my appointment by the Secretary of State as the lead member of the Examining Authority (ExA) to carry out an examination of the above application I am writing to introduce myself and the other members of the ExA. My name is Janine Laver and the other members of the ExA are David Love and Ben Northover. A copy of the appointment notices can be viewed under the [documents tab](#) on the project webpage of the Find a National Infrastructure Project website [Lime Down Solar Project](#).

We would like to thank those of you who submitted relevant representations (RRs). These RRs have assisted us when considering how we will examine this application.

Invitation to the preliminary meeting

As a recipient of this letter, you are invited to the preliminary meeting on **Tuesday 21 April 2026** to discuss the procedure for the examination of the above application. The agenda for the meeting is at **Annex A** to this letter.

Date	Start time	Venue and joining details
Tuesday 21 April 2026	Registration and seating available at venue from: 9:15am Virtual registration process from: 9:15am Preliminary meeting starts: 10:00am	Neeld Community & Arts Centre Borough Parade, Chippenham, SN15 3WL and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered

Requests to Participate in the Preliminary Meeting

If you intend to participate in the preliminary meeting in person or virtually, you must register by completing the [event participation form](#) by procedural deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026) and provide all the information requested below:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of your letter or email from the Planning Inspectorate) (and that of any person/ organisation that you are representing, if applicable)
- Email address (if available) and contact telephone number
- Confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in person
- The agenda item on which you wish to speak and a list of the points you wish to make

Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support or assistance to attend the preliminary meeting, either virtually or in person.

If you simply wish to observe the preliminary meeting virtually then you do not need to register as you will be able to watch a livestream of the event. A link to the livestream will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before the event is scheduled to begin. You will also be able to watch the recording of the event which will be published on the project webpage shortly after the event has finished.

Purpose of the preliminary meeting

The purpose of the preliminary meeting is to enable views to be put to us about how the application should be examined. This is explained in more detail in **Annex B** to this letter.

The preliminary meeting is not an opportunity for you to give your views about what you like or do not like about the application. There will be subsequent opportunities for you to discuss the merits or disadvantages of the application once the examination starts, which is after the preliminary meeting has closed. All relevant and important matters will be taken into account when we make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Energy Security and Net Zero, who will take the final decision in this case.

The agenda for this meeting (**Annex A**) has been set following our initial assessment of principal issues arising from our reading of the application documents and the relevant representations received. The initial assessment of principal issues is set out in **Annex C** to this letter.

Written submissions about how the application should be examined

The Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) establishes a principally written process for the examination of applications for development consent orders and **representations made in writing carry equal weight to oral representations at all stages of the process**.

You are invited to make a written submission about how the application is to be examined by **procedural deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026)**. We particularly wish to hear from you if either:

1. you consider changes need to be made to the draft examination timetable set out at **Annex D** to this letter
2. you wish to comment about the arrangements for future examination hearings, including the use of virtual methods

We request that all submissions are made using the [Have your say page](#) on the project webpage on or before **procedural deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026)**. **Annex H** to this letter provides further information about using the 'Have your say' page. All submissions should include reasons for your comments.

Please note that you are not required to attend or make written submissions to the preliminary meeting in order to participate in the examination. If you are an interested party (IP), you can still make subsequent written submissions and comment on the written submissions made by other IPs during the examination regardless of attendance at the preliminary meeting. You will also be able to participate in any hearings that are arranged.

Format of examination events – preliminary meeting and hearings

The examination of the application will principally be a written process supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. See the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice for members of the public: The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

Both blended (part in-person and part virtual) and fully virtual events form part of the Planning Inspectorate's operating model. We remain flexible and will confirm the format of any hearings to be held during the examination stage when we provide formal notification of each hearing in advance of it taking place.

We are providing formal notification that the preliminary meeting will be a blended event.

If you attend the event either in person or online you are agreeing to be filmed for the purposes of the online livestream of the event and the recording of the event which will be published on the project webpage. A limited number of seats will be available for observers who wish not to be filmed at the venue. Please contact the Case Team to notify them if you prefer not to be filmed at the event. A transcript of the event will also be published on the project page of our website after the event.

After the preliminary meeting

As soon as practicable after the preliminary meeting we will issue a letter (known as the Rule 8 Letter) setting out the finalised examination timetable. A note of the meeting will also be published on the [project webpage](#).

Notification of initial hearings

We have made a procedural decision to hold the following initial hearings, which will be blended events:

- **Open floor hearing 1 (OFH1)** on the afternoon of **Tuesday 21 April 2026**. Depending on the number of participants, this hearing may run into the evening.
- **Issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)** on the morning of **Wednesday 22 April 2026** on the scope of the development. Due to venue restrictions, this hearing must conclude by 3.00pm.

Important information about these hearings is contained in **Annex E** to this letter, including what details need to be provided with a request to be heard at a hearing and the procedure that will be followed.

Other procedural decisions made by the ExA

We have made some further procedural decisions which are set out in detail at **Annex F** to this letter. They are summarised as follows:

1. Use of artificial intelligence in submissions
2. Requests for statements of common ground
3. Comments on relevant representations
4. Accompanied site inspections – suggested locations
5. Deadline for the submission of local impact reports and written representations
6. Document updates

7. Requests for a future open floor hearing
8. Requests for a compulsory acquisition hearing
9. Acceptance of additional submissions into the examination

Changes to land interests

If and when the applicant becomes aware that there has been a change in ownership, or a new interest in relevant land, the applicant is requested to make the relevant person aware that they can make a request to the ExA to become an IP under section 102A of the PA2008. They should inform them that information about how to do this can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's advice for members of the public: [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and the people and organisations involved in the process](#).

Managing examination correspondence

Given the volume and frequency of letters the Planning Inspectorate needs to send to IPs during an examination, we aim to communicate with people by email as much as possible, as electronic communication is more environmentally friendly and cost effective.

If you have received a letter but would prefer to receive future communications by email, please inform the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter.

As the examination process makes substantial use of electronic documents, it will be useful for you to become familiar with the [project webpage](#).

A [Have your say page](#) is available on the website through which parties should make written submissions at relevant deadlines during the examination.

You can also use the '[Get updates](#)' button on the project webpage to register to receive automatic e-mail updates at key stages during the examination.

Your status in the examination

You have received this letter because you are a person or organisation who is involved in the NSIP process. See the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice for members of the public: National Infrastructure Projects and the people and organisations involved in the process](#) for further details.

If, having read the advice, you are still unsure about how you are involved in the process please contact the Case Team using the details at the top of this letter.

Awards of costs

All parties will normally be expected to meet their own costs. Costs can be awarded against a party who has acted unreasonably and has caused the party applying for the award of costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense during the examination.

You should be aware of the relevant costs guidance [Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent orders](#).

Management of information

Information, including representations, submitted in respect of this examination (if accepted by the ExA) and a record of any advice which has been provided by the Planning Inspectorate is published on the [project webpage](#).

In the interest of facilitating an effective and fair examination, it is necessary to publish some personal information. To find out how we handle your personal information please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

How to stay up to date

All further documents submitted in the course of the examination will also be published under the [documents tab](#) of the project webpage.

You can also sign up to get [email updates](#).

If you have any questions about the process, examination events or how to access the documents, you can email limedown@planninginspectorate.gov.uk or contact us on 0303 444 5000.

We look forward to working with all parties in the examination of this application.

Yours faithfully

Janine Laver

Lead Member of the Examining Authority

Annexes

- A** Agenda for the preliminary meeting
- B** Preliminary meeting and examination guide
- C** Initial assessment of principal issues
- D** Draft examination timetable
- E** Notification of initial hearings
- F** Other procedural decisions made by the ExA
- G** Examination documents
- H** Information about the 'Have your say' page

This communication does not constitute legal advice.

Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

AGENDA FOR THE PRELIMINARY MEETING

Date:	Tuesday 21 April 2026
Registration process:	from 9:15am
Meeting start time:	10:00am
Venue:	In person at Neeld Community & Arts Centre, Chippenham, SN15 3WL and online via Microsoft Teams
	Full instructions on how to join online or by phone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
Attendees:	Invited parties who have pre-registered

Agenda for the preliminary meeting	
9.15am	Registration and seating available at venue for in-person attendees.
9.15am	<p>Virtual registration process</p> <p>Please arrive at 9:15am to enter the virtual lobby. From here you will be admitted to the virtual meeting by the Case Team, greeted and given further instructions.</p> <p>The registration process will commence at 9:15am. This will be hosted by the Case Team and cover the housekeeping arrangements for the preliminary meeting and allow for any questions to be asked about how to take part.</p>
10.00am	<p>Preliminary meeting</p> <p>Item 1</p> <p>The preliminary meeting will formally open at 10:00am. The Examining Authority will join, welcome participants and lead introductions. The public livestream and recording will start.</p>
Item 2	The ExA's remarks about the examination process.
Item 3	Initial assessment of principal issues – Annex C to Rule 6 Letter.
Item 4	Draft examination timetable – Annex D to Rule 6 Letter.
Item 5	Procedural decisions made by the ExA – Annex F to the Rule 6 Letter.
Item 6	Any other matters
Close of the preliminary meeting	

If you are participating using Microsoft Teams, please join the virtual lobby promptly using the instructions that will be sent to you. The event will start at **10:00am** irrespective of late arrivals.

It may take some time to admit participants from the virtual lobby, your patience whilst you are waiting is appreciated.

The agenda for the preliminary meeting is subject to change at the discretion of the ExA, although in making changes the ExA will be mindful of the need to provide opportunities for fair involvement to all invited parties.

Any request to participate in the preliminary meeting **must include** the following information and be made on the [event participation form](#):

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top your letter or email from The Planning Inspectorate) (and that of any person/ organisation that you are representing, if applicable)
- Email address (if available) and contact telephone number
- Confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person
- The agenda item on which you wish to speak and a list of the points you wish to make

PRELIMINARY MEETING AND EXAMINATION GUIDE

Background

The preliminary meeting (PM) will be a blended event with some participants attending in person and some taking part virtually using Microsoft Teams

The ExA will aim to keep the proceedings focused and as efficient as possible. This annex provides advance access to information that would usually be included in the ExA's introductory remarks. Please read this carefully. The ExA will only present a summary of the key points set out here to ensure that the time available for participants to speak is maximised.

Introductions

The ExA will introduce themselves at the start of the PM.

The ExA will be supported in person and behind the scenes by the Planning Inspectorate Case Team. During the registration process a member of the Case Team will welcome and admit participants from the virtual lobby and will be available to answer questions by email before and after the PM. The contact email address is: limedown@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

The purpose of the preliminary meeting

The PM is being held to discuss the arrangements for the examination of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Lime Down Solar Project, and which will generally be referred to in the PM and examination as 'the proposed development'. The application has been made by Lime Down Solar Park Limited, which will be referred to as 'the applicant'.

You will find information about the application, and, in due course, documents produced for the examination on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure website. The project webpage has links to the examination timetable, relevant representations and examination documents and examination procedures.

You are encouraged to look at the project webpage if you haven't already done so, because it will be used to communicate with you and to provide access to documents throughout the examination.

The PM will focus on the examination process only, such as when documents should be submitted, when responses should be provided and when hearings should be held. In that regard the ExA will not be considering the substance of the proposals. Questions, discussions and representations about the merits or disadvantages of the proposed development are for the examination itself, which will begin immediately after the close of the PM.

Government guidance and policy

The application is a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) as a consequence of sections 14 and 15 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) because it includes a generating station that would have a capacity of more than 50 megawatts (MW).

The Infrastructure Planning (offshore Wind and Solar Generation) Order 2025, which came into force on 31 December 2025, raised the NSIP threshold from 50MW to 100MW for solar proposals; however, Article 5 of the 2025 Order retains the lower threshold of 50MW for applications made before 31 December 2025. As such, the 2025 Order does not change the status of the application as a NSIP.

National Policy Statements (NPSs) for Energy (NPS EN-1), for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3), and for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5), dated November 2023, and which came into force in January 2024, apply to this examination and to decision making relating to this application.

The NPSs were recently updated (December 2025) and came into force on 6 January 2026. However, section 1.6 of the updated NPS EN-1 states that for any application accepted for examination before the final publication of the 2025 amendments, the 2024 suite of NPSs should have effect.

The ExA will therefore consider the proposed development in accordance with the 2024 NPSs and any other applicable policy or considerations the ExA deem to be important and relevant. The PA2008 makes it clear that in making a decision, the SoS *“must decide the application in accordance with any relevant NPS”* (s104(3)), subject to certain provisos. Essentially, the provisos are that the application must not breach legal or treaty obligations, and that any adverse impact of the proposed development would not outweigh its benefits.

The SoS is entitled to disregard any representations that relate to the merits of the designated NPSs. In practice, this means that the ExA will not spend time examining representations that challenge policy set out in NPSs, or the validity of NPSs themselves. The focus will be on the merits or otherwise of the proposed development, tested to the appropriate extent using the tests set out in relevant designated NPSs that are in force.

Other important and relevant planning policies that the ExA may consider include policies in the relevant local authorities' development plans. However, if these conflict with policy in a NPS, then the NPS will take precedence.

Preliminary meeting invitees

The applicant is invited to the PM and is generally given the opportunity to reply to any representations made.

Everyone who has made a valid relevant representation has been registered as an IP and has been invited to the PM. All IPs are entitled to involvement in the examination.

Each person or organisation with an interest in land or rights that are affected by a compulsory acquisition request in this application is an affected person (AP) and has been invited to the PM. In addition to a general entitlement to involvement in the examination, APs have a right to be heard in relation to any objection about the effects of compulsory acquisition on their interests in land, and a right to be notified of any compulsory acquisition hearing. All APs are IPs, whether or not they have made a valid relevant representation.

Certain bodies are statutory parties, and they have been invited to the PM. Statutory parties can elect to become IPs without having made a valid RR by notifying the ExA in writing by **Deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)**.

The ExA also has the power to involve people who are not IPs in the examination as though they are IPs, including by inviting them to the PM. However, this is only done in exceptional circumstances, for example if it was clear that the application would materially affect a person, they are not automatically an IP or eligible to elect to become an IP and they had been unable to take the necessary action to register as an IP.

Conduct of the preliminary meeting

The PM will start promptly at 10:00am and is likely to take up to two and a half hours to complete.

During the PM participants may have to make allowances and be patient if there are delays associated with the technology used. The ExA will provide breaks during the PM as appropriate.

A digital recording of the PM will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the close of the PM. The recording allows any member of the public who is interested in the application and the examination to find out what has been discussed at the PM. In this regard, **anyone speaking at the PM will need to introduce themselves each time they speak**, to ensure that someone listening to the recording after the event is clear who was speaking. A written note of the PM will be produced and published as soon as practicable following the close of the PM.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the UK General Data Protection Regulation applies. Participants must do their best to avoid providing any information which should otherwise be kept private and confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written form. While a written submission will also be published, personal and private content can be redacted or removed by the Planning Inspectorate before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the Case Team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain.

The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and retain them for a period of 5 years from the SoS's decision on the DCO. If you actively participate in the PM, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the

recording will be made available in the public domain. Please see our [Privacy Notice](#) for more information about how the Planning Inspectorate handles your data.

Following the ExA's introductions, each participant who has been registered to speak will be asked to introduce themselves, including any organisations or groups that they represent. The ExA will then conduct the meeting in accordance with the agenda.

The examination process

Section 87 of the PA2008 states that it is for the ExA to decide how to examine the application.

Examining Inspectors are employed by the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate is an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. For the examination of NSIPs the ExA produces an independent and impartial report with a recommendation to the relevant Secretary of State. In the case of this project this is the SoS for Energy Security and Net Zero. **It is the SoS who will make the decision on the application, not the ExA.**

The examination of NSIPs follows different processes to those, for example, of a public inquiry into a planning appeal following the refusal of planning permission. The main differences are that the examination of a NSIP is primarily conducted through a written process, with the ExA probing, testing and assessing the evidence primarily using written questions.

While some hearings are held, these will follow an inquisitorial approach, as opposed to an adversarial approach, meaning that questions to the applicant or to witnesses will come from the ExA. Questioning or cross-examination of witnesses by other parties will not generally be allowed.

In terms of opportunities to provide evidence in writing, the draft examination timetable makes provision for the following written processes:

- Local authorities can submit local impact reports (LIRs) if they wish. Whilst these are voluntary, the PA2008 provides that if they are submitted, they must be considered by the SoS in reaching a decision. Consequently, LIRs are a very important method for local authorities to communicate issues of concern to the ExA, the SoS and their residents
- IPs can make written representations (WRs) and subsequently comment on WRs made by other parties
- IPs can respond to the ExA's written questions (ExQs) and comment on responses to ExQs provided by others
- IPs may be asked to contribute to the making of statements of common ground (SoCGs) if it appears that there are matters on which they and the applicant agree, and if it would be useful for this to be clarified. SoCGs most usefully extend to catalogue matters that are not agreed or are outstanding

The draft examination timetable includes a series of numbered deadlines for receipt of written submissions. Timely submissions received by the relevant deadline and that address its purpose will be accepted. **Documents received after the relevant deadline are only accepted at the discretion of the ExA and may not be accepted to ensure fairness to all parties.** Circumstances where documents are submitted late without good reason, causing inconvenience or delay to other parties can amount to unreasonable behaviour.

There is no merit in withholding or delaying information, or in failing to co-operate, and should it occur, any unreasonable behaviour that caused another party to incur wasted expenditure could lead to an award of costs against the offending party.

The examination will therefore only be effective if all parties resolve to give timely, full, frank, clear and evidenced answers to every question that is relevant to their interests and to engage fully with any other related processes, such as the completion of WRs and SoCGs. These written processes will be the principal means used by the ExA to gather information, evidence and views about the application.

The ExA has discretion to make amendments to the examination timetable for the wider benefit of the examination. However, the ExA is under a duty to complete the examination by the end of the six-month period beginning with the day after the close of the PM. This requirement is set by legislation, and **while the ExA will consider requests at the PM for alternative dates for submission of documents and events, in practice there will be limited scope to alter dates set out in the draft examination timetable.**

The statutory time limit for the examination means that where there are matters that still need to be discussed and agreed between the applicant and IPs, it will be very helpful to the ExA if these could be progressed as early as possible.

Hearings

The draft examination timetable includes provision for hearings, at which the ExA takes oral evidence from the various parties.

Open Floor Hearing (OFH)

Any registered IP may request an OFH to make oral representations about the application if they believe this to be preferable to relying on their written representation, though both carry equal weight. **Oral submissions should be based on representations previously made in writing, but they should not simply repeat matters previously covered in the written submission.** Rather, they should focus on specific detail and explanation to help inform the ExA. There should be no new or unexpected material in oral representations. A written summary note with any supporting evidence or references will be requested of each speaker following the hearing.

As with all examination events, OFHs are subject to the powers of control of the ExA, as set out in the PA2008 and supporting legislation. Participants must register in advance by the deadline(s) shown in the examination timetable and in accordance

with the instructions. It is common practice for the ExA to set a time limit for each speaker and **speakers with common points are asked to come together to nominate a spokesperson or representative speaker(s) to cover specific topics, so as to avoid repetition**. Speakers representing public authorities, community and membership organisations or multiple IPs are normally provided with an additional time allowance, recognising their representative role.

The ExA has provided notification in this letter of an OFH on the afternoon of **Tuesday 21 April 2026**. Participants must register in advance by **Monday 9 March 2026** on the [event participation form](#). Time has also been reserved for a further OFH during the week commencing 9 June 2026, but this would only be held if requested by IPs who did not have the opportunity to participate at OFH1 on 21 April 2026. The deadline for IPs to submit requests for a further OFH is Friday 1 May 2026.

Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH)

The applicant's draft DCO provides for the compulsory acquisition of land and rights, and the temporary possession of land. APs (meaning those whose land or rights over land are affected) have a right to request and be heard at a CAH. If one or more APs request to be heard, then a CAH must be held. Provisional dates for CAHs are included in the draft examination timetable (**Annex D**) along with deadlines by which requests to be heard must be submitted.

Issue Specific Hearing (ISH)

The ExA has the discretion to hold ISHs if it would aid the examination and there is a specific reason this would be more helpful than reliance on written evidence only. An ISH may include agenda items on a range of environmental matters as well as the draft DCO. DCO hearings are held on a without prejudice basis. Parties can and are encouraged to suggest modifications and amendments to the draft DCO provided by the applicant with the application, without prejudicing their overall position on the application.

Holding a DCO hearing does not imply that the ExA has reached any judgement on the merits of the application. Whether the ExA's recommendation to the SoS is favourable or unfavourable, the ExA must still make sure that the draft DCO is fit for purpose if the SoS decides to grant consent. In that regard, the examination is likely to include at least one hearing on the draft DCO.

The lack of an ISH on one or more other topics does not mean that that topic is less important to the ExA than others which are subject to a hearing. Rather, it is an indication that the ExA is satisfied that the issues can be fully considered through written submissions and responses to its written questions and that each party has had a fair opportunity to put its case. The ExA has provided notification in this letter for the first ISH with further information provided in **Annex E**.

The draft examination timetable at **Annex D** includes a number of dates reserved for subsequent ISHs if the ExA decides they are required. IPs may make suggestions for topics to be discussed at an ISH in their written or oral representations to the PM.

All parties are reminded that if they register to participate in hearings, it is not necessary for them to make long and detailed submissions that require PowerPoint presentations. Any supporting detail/ information can be provided in writing following the event by the relevant deadline.

Site inspections

As part of the examination process the ExA may undertake site inspections. These can be either unaccompanied or accompanied.

The purpose of these is for the ExA to see features of the proposals within the context of the evidence put forward. Notes of unaccompanied site inspections (USIs) which generally identify the locations which the ExA has visited, will be published on the [project webpage](#).

Accompanied site inspections (ASIs) will only be necessary to view land to which there is no public right of access, or with no clear view from nearby locations with open public access. The draft Examination Timetable in **Annex D** makes provision for ASIs to be held.

The draft examination timetable includes a deadline (**Monday 9 March 2026**) for IPs to make submissions suggesting sites and locations that the ExA should visit. These will be used to inform USIs as well as possible ASIs.

Further information about this process is included at **Annex F** of this letter.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF PRINCIPAL ISSUES

This is the initial assessment of principal issues prepared as required under section 88(1) of the PA2008. It has been prepared by the ExA following its reading of:

- the application documents
- the RRs received in respect of the application
- its consideration of any other important and relevant matters

It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list of the issues that will be subject to examination and inevitably some issues will overlap or interrelate. The ExA will have regard to all important and relevant matters during the examination and when it writes its recommendation to the SoS for Energy Security and Net Zero after the examination has concluded.

The policy and consenting requirements and documents associated with the PA2008 are an integral part of the examination and are therefore not listed as main issues. Nonetheless, and for clarification, the following National Policy Statements (NPS) published in November 2023 and designated in January 2024 have effect:

- The overarching National Policy Statement for Energy ([NPS EN-1](#))
- The NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure ([NPS EN-3](#)), particularly section 2.10 relating to solar photovoltaic generation
- The NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure ([NPS EN-5](#))

The order of the principal issues listed below is alphabetic and does not imply any order of prioritisation or importance. The issues are indicative at this early stage and do not preclude other issues being considered or some being grouped together for reporting purposes:

- Biodiversity, ecology and the natural environment
- Climate impacts, including greenhouse gas assessment, equipment resilience and equipment sustainability
- Cultural heritage, including archaeology
- Cumulative and in-combination effects
- Land use and soils, including loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land, and food security
- Landscape and visual impact
- Population and risks to human health, including noise impacts and potential for, and modelling of, battery energy storage systems (BESS) thermal runaway
- Site selection, alternatives, scale, generation capacity, technology and design
- Socio-economics, including impacts on local amenity (residential properties, local businesses, tourism and recreation uses)
- Transportation and traffic
- Water environment and flood risk

Specifically in relation to the principle of/ need for the proposed development, the energy NPSs make clear that there is an urgent need for new electricity network infrastructure, including large scale ground mounted solar and battery storage. As a result, the principle of development will not be a principal issue in the examination. Nevertheless, as noted above, the approach to site selection, alternatives, scale, generation capacity, technology, and design of the proposed infrastructure will be examined.

Matters relating to compulsory acquisition, temporary possession, and the draft Development Consent Order are not listed as principal issues, however they will form an integral part of the examination.

Consideration will also be given to all relevant matters during the construction, operation and decommissioning activities associated with the proposed development, and cumulatively with other plans and projects, as necessary.

It should also be noted that whilst the effects of the proposal in relation to human rights and equalities duties are not listed as principal issues, the ExA will conduct all aspects of the examination with these in mind.

DRAFT EXAMINATION TIMETABLE

The ExA is under a duty to complete the examination of the application by the end of the period of 6 months beginning with the day after the close of the preliminary meeting.

The examination of the application primarily takes the form of the consideration of written submissions. The ExA will also consider any oral representations made at hearings.

Item	Matters	Date
1.	<p>Procedural deadline A</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any written submissions on the examination procedure, including any submissions about the draft examination timetable • Requests by interested parties (IPs) to speak at the preliminary meeting, including which agenda items you wish to speak on, points you wish to make and why these need to be made orally rather than in writing • Requests by IPs to speak at Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) on Tuesday 21 April 2026 • Requests by IPs to participate in Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on Wednesday 22 April 2026 • Comments on relevant representations (RRs), as requested in Annex F of this letter • Applicant's submission of an amended Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker and submission of a spreadsheet version of the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Appendix, as requested in Annex F of this letter • Suggestions from IPs for locations for site inspections (accompanied or unaccompanied), including justification, and whether such locations can be seen from public land or require private access, for consideration by the ExA 	Monday 9 March 2026
2.	<p>Procedural deadline B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's draft itinerary for an ASI for consideration by the ExA (if subsequently required) 	Wednesday 1 April 2026

3.	Preliminary meeting	Tuesday 21 April 2026 (10:00am)
4.	Open floor hearing 1 (OFH1)	Tuesday 21 April 2026 (2:00pm)
5.	Issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1) ISH1 relating to the scope of development, including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) • Site selection, alternatives and design evolution • Generating capacity 	Wednesday 22 April 2026 (10:00am)
6.	Publication by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The examination timetable (Rule 8 Letter) 	As soon as possible following the preliminary meeting
7.	Deadline 1 For receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification by any statutory parties who have not submitted a RR of their wish to be considered as an IP by the ExA • Comments on RRs (if these have not been provided at procedural deadline A) • Written representations (WRs) and summaries for any that exceed 1500 words • Local impact reports (LIRs) from any local authorities • Comments on the applicant's draft itinerary for the ASI • Requests from IPs to be heard at any further OFH • Requests from Affected Persons (defined in section 59(4) of the Planning Act 2008) to be heard at a compulsory acquisition hearing (CAH) • Initial statements of common ground (SoCGs), as requested in Annex F of this letter • The applicant's updated documents if any revisions have been made, as set out in Annex F of this letter 	Friday 1 May 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any further information requested by the ExA under rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	
8.	<p>Deadline 1A</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post hearing submissions, including written summaries of any oral cases, and responses to any hearing action points arising from OFH1 and ISH1 	Friday 8 May 2026
9.	<p>Deadline 2</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on WRs Comments on LIRs Comments on initial SoCGs Comments from any party on any other submissions received at deadlines 1 and 1A Notification of a wish to attend the ASI (if required) in the week commencing 8 June 2026 The applicant's updated documents if any revisions have been made, as set out in Annex F of this letter Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Wednesday 20 May 2026
10.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ExA's first written questions (ExQ1) 	Monday 1 June 2026
11.	Dates reserved for ASI (if required)	Week commencing 8 June 2026
12.	<p>Deadline 3</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to ExQ1 Comments from any party on any other submissions received at deadline 2 The applicant's updated documents if any revisions have been made, as set out in Annex F of this letter 	Friday 12 June 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	
13.	Dates reserved for hearings (ISH, CAH and/ or OFH (if required))	Week commencing 29 June 2026
14.	<p>Deadline 4</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post hearing submissions, including written summaries of any oral cases, and responses to any hearing action points. Comments on responses to ExQ1 Comments from any party on any other submissions received at deadline 3 The applicant's updated documents if any revisions have been made, as set out in Annex F of this letter Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Friday 10 July 2026
15.	Publication by the ExA of:	Monday 27 July 2026
16.	<p>Deadline 5</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responses to ExQ2 Comments from any party on any other submissions received at deadline 4 The applicant's updated documents if any revisions have been made, as set out in Annex F of this letter Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Friday 7 August 2026
17.	<p>Deadline 6</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comments on responses to ExQ2 Comments from any party on any other submissions received at deadline 5 	Friday 21 August 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant's updated documents if any revisions have been made, as set out in Annex F of this letter • Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	
18.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) and any associated questions (if required) • The ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO (if required) 	Friday 28 August 2026
19.	Dates reserved for hearings and further ASI (if required)	Week commencing 14 September 2026
20.	<p>Deadline 7</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post hearing submissions, including written summaries of any oral cases, and responses to any hearing action points. • Comments from any party on any other submissions received at deadline 6 • Comments on the RIES and responses to any associated questions within the RIES (if issued by ExA) • Comments on the ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO (if issued by ExA) <p>Final updated documents (in clean and tracked versions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed SoCGs and a list of matters not agreed where SoCGs could not be finalised • dDCO to be submitted by the applicant in the statutory instrument (SI) template with the SI template validation report • Book of reference (BoR) and schedule of changes to BoR • Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker • Guide to the Application 	Friday 2 October 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Statement and other documents including management plans/ control documents • Any signed and dated section 106 agreements together with CIL compliance schedule • Applicant's closing statement with summary of areas of disagreement • IPs closing statement(s) (if desired) regarding matters that they have previously raised during the examination and which have not been resolved to their satisfaction • Any further information requested by the ExA under rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	
21.	Deadline 8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any further information requested by the ExA under rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Friday 16 October 2026
22.	Close of examination See '*Note about the close of examination date'.	Wednesday 21 October 2026

***Note about the close of examination date**

The ExA is under a duty to complete the examination of the application by the end of the period of 6 months beginning with the day after the close of the preliminary meeting. The ExA may however decide to close the examination earlier than the date specified in the examination timetable above if it considers that the application and relevant matters have been examined adequately.

Submission times for deadlines

The time for submission of documents at any deadline and the close of the examination in the timetable is 23:59 on the relevant deadline date, unless instructed otherwise by the ExA.

Publication dates

All information received will be published on the documents page of the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the deadlines for submissions.

Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES)

Where an applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the application, the ExA may decide to issue a RIES during the examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided to the ExA on HRA matters during the examination up to the date of the publication of the RIES, for the purposes of enabling the SoS, as competent authority, to undertake its HRA. It is not the ExA's opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited by the ExA and any received will be taken into account as part of the ExA's recommendation to the Secretary of State. The ExA may also raise questions in the RIES to confirm or clarify matters that remain outstanding.

The SoS may rely on the consultation on the RIES to meet its obligations under regulation 63(3) of The Habitats Regulations 2017 and/ or Regulation 28 of The Offshore Marine Regulations.

NOTIFICATION OF INITIAL HEARINGS

The ExA provides notice of the following initial hearings:

Date	Hearing	Start time	Venue and Joining details
Tuesday 21 April 2026	Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1)	Registration and seating available at venue from: 1:15pm Virtual registration process from: 1:15pm Hearing starts: 2:00pm	Neeld Community & Arts Centre Borough Parade, Chippenham, SN15 3WL and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
Wednesday 22 April 2026	Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on the scope of the development, including (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft DCO provisions • Site selection, alternatives and design evolution • Generating capacity 	Registration and seating available at venue from: 9:15am Virtual registration process from: 9:15am Hearing starts: 10:00am	Neeld Community & Arts Centre Borough Parade, Chippenham, SN15 3WL And By virtual means using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
If any of the above hearings are no longer required then notification that a particular date is no longer required will be published as soon as practicable on the project webpage , providing reasonable notice to interested parties of the decision to cancel them.			

If you intend to participate in any of the hearings notified above, you must register by completing the [event participation form](#) by **Monday 9 March 2026** and provide all the information requested below:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of any letter or email from The Planning Inspectorate) (and that of any person/ organisation that you are representing, if applicable)
- Email address (if available) and contact telephone number
- Confirmation of your wish to participate in either OFH1 or ISH1 or both, and whether you will participate virtually or in person
- The Examination Library reference number (with paragraph/ page number where appropriate) of any documents you wish to refer to

It may not be possible to participate on the day if you have not registered your wish to speak by **Monday 9 March 2026**.

Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support or assistance to attend any of the hearings, either virtually or in person.

If you simply wish to observe the hearings virtually then you do not need to register as you will be able to watch a livestream of the event. A link to the livestream will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before the event is scheduled to begin. You will also be able to watch the recording of the event which will be published on the project webpage shortly after the event has finished.

Hearing agendas

For OFH1 scheduled for the afternoon of **Tuesday 21 April 2026**, an agenda will be published at least five working days before the event confirming a speaking order and time slots for registered participants to make their oral submissions. Depending on the number of requested participants, the OFH may run into the evening.

Additional time has been reserved later in the examination for a further OFH if requests are made by IPs who are unable to participate on Tuesday 21 April.

For ISH1 scheduled for **Wednesday 22 April 2026**, the notice of hearing above specifies that its purpose will be to consider the scope of the proposed development and how the site selection was made along with other overarching matters. This is intended to be a high level hearing in which the ExA will seek updates from (and direct questions to) the applicant only. This does not mean that IPs are not welcome to participate, but if the ExA considers it beneficial for any specific IPs to attend ISH1, including relevant local authorities, they will be listed in the forthcoming agenda, which again will be issued at least five working days before the event.

For subsequent ISHs and/ or CAHs, the ExA will also publish a detailed draft agenda on the [project webpage](#) at least 5 working days in advance of the hearing date(s). However, the actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA.

Procedure at hearings

The examination of the application will principally be a written process supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. See the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice for members of the public: The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public provides important information about hearing procedures:

- [What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#)
- [Registering to speak at, or attend, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#)

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in rule 14 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010. The ExA is responsible for the oral questioning of a person giving evidence and the process affords very limited scope to allow cross-questioning between parties.

Hearing livestream and recording

A link to a livestream for each hearing will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before any hearing is due to open. The livestream is available to anybody who wishes to observe a hearing in real time.

All hearings are recorded, and the recordings will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the close of the hearing. The recordings allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the examination to find out what has been discussed.

OTHER PROCEDURAL DECISIONS MADE BY THE EXA

The ExA has made the following procedural decisions:

1. Use of artificial intelligence in submissions

The Planning Inspectorate understands the benefits that artificial intelligence (AI) can bring to the planning system when it is used ethically and transparently. To aid the beneficial use of AI in casework evidence, all participants in the examination are directed to [guidance](#) for information that has been generated or altered by AI.

If any party uses AI to create its submission, it is important to let us know if you have used AI in any way. This does not include basic spell-checks or grammar tools.

All parties should specify which AI systems or tools have been used, the source of the information that the AI system has based its content on, and what parts of the submitted information or representation AI has been used to create or alter.

Where you have used AI systems to summarise, substantially rewrite or add commentary to information which goes beyond a simple factual description, this can affect the accuracy and interpretation of the underlying data. In addition to telling us that you have used AI, as with all other information submitted to us, it is your responsibility to ensure that it is fit for purpose, accurate, complete and not misleading.

By following this guidance, you will help the ExA to understand the origin and accuracy of the information submitted, thereby supporting our fair and impartial examination of the application.

If you do not declare the use of AI in any evidence submission where it has been used or remove evidence such as watermarks, the ExA reserves the right to reject the submission.

2. Statements of common ground (SoCGs)

Purpose of SoCGs

In relation to some of the principal issues identified in **Annex C** to this letter, the ExA would be assisted by the preparation of SoCGs between the applicant and certain IPs.

The aim of a SoCG is to agree factual information and to inform the ExA and all other parties by identifying where there is agreement and where the differences lie at an early stage in the examination process. It should provide a focus and save time by identifying matters which are not in dispute or need not be the subject of further evidence.

In particular, the SoCG should identify where the differences between parties

lie and the reasons for any disagreement or outstanding matters. Where disagreement exists, it would assist the ExA for the SoCG to specify what actions could be taken to address the matters in contention.

The content and status of SoCGs will help to inform the ExA about the need to hold any issue specific hearings during the examination, and to enable the ExA and the applicant to give notice of such hearings in advance of them taking place.

If there is documented agreement between the applicant and any party listed below in respect of protective provisions and no other matters of disagreement remain, then a statement to this effect would suffice and no SoCG is required. In the absence of such agreement, and even if agreement is expected to be reached, then a SoCG should be provided and submitted by the Applicant in the first instance.

Initial SoCG request

SoCGs are requested to be prepared between the applicant and the following parties:

- a) Wiltshire Council
- b) South Gloucestershire Council
- c) Environment Agency
- d) National Highways
- e) Natural England
- f) Historic England
- g) Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
- h) National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc
- i) National Grid Electricity Distribution (South West) plc
- j) Dorset and Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
- k) Defence Infrastructure Organisation
- l) Cotswolds National Landscape Board
- m) The British Horse Society (Wiltshire Access Team)
- n) Wiltshire Bridleways Association
- o) Wessex Water
- p) Bristol Water
- q) Any Internal Drainage Board whose District is in/ adjacent to the Order limits (if applicable)

Depending on matters arising during the examination, the ExA may identify additional parties with whom SoCGs are required.

Matters to be covered in SoCGs

SoCGs should cover the following matters, to the extent that they are relevant to the particular interests of the party:

- as appropriate for its area of responsibility, the matters listed under the relevant headings in the ExA's Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (see **Annex C** of this letter)

- all matters raised in its RR (where one has been submitted)
- relevant policy, legislation and guidance
- the articles and requirements of the draft DCO [\[APP-016\]](#). Any IP seeking an article or requirement to be reworded should provide the form of words which are being sought
- mitigation, monitoring and management plans
- a summary of matters agreed and matters not agreed or outstanding
- details of any supplementary agreements, such as draft Section 106 agreements or commercial side agreements
- any other matters upon which agreement might aid the running of the examination and assist the ExA's recommendation to the SoS

The suggested content of the SoCGs is indicative and does not preclude the inclusion of other matters considered to be important and relevant to either of the parties.

Submission of SoCGs

The draft examination timetable at **Annex D** to this letter establishes **deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)** for submission of initial SoCGs.

If an initial SoCG cannot be agreed between the parties by deadline 1, or if any local authority position needs to be signed off at a higher level, then draft versions are requested to be submitted by the applicant at that deadline. The position of the relevant interested party should then be confirmed during the examination.

The draft examination timetable makes provision for updated SoCGs to be submitted at each deadline if there have been changes since the last submission date. Final versions must be submitted by **deadline 7 (Friday 2 October 2026)**.

3. Comments on relevant representations (RRs)

Rule 3(2) of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 requires written comments on any RRs to be submitted either on the date of the PM, or a date specified in the Rule 8 letter, which follows as soon as practicable following the PM, whichever is the later.

The ExA has noted from experience that applicants generally respond as quickly as possible following the close of the RR period, and given the notable period of time between the close of RRs (12 January 2026) and the scheduled PM (21 April 2026), it would be helpful to all parties and the examination overall if the applicant's comments on RRs could be submitted by **procedural deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026)**. Early response would aid the subsequent early submission of WRs and LIRs in the examination at **deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)**.

Comments on RRs should:

- specify the names of the parties making the representation and the relevant Examination Library reference in order to demonstrate that all RRs have been responded to
- representations made by statutory consultees should be listed separately or highlighted so that they are easily identifiable
- where representations have been made by affected persons who are listed in the book of reference [[APP-020](#)], this should be specified, and cross referenced to the Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker
- where a detailed or tabular representation has been submitted, responses should be presented in a comparable manner in order to ensure that all points are responded to in similar terms

4. Accompanied site inspections (ASIs) – suggested locations

ASIs will only be necessary to view land to which there is no public right of access, or with no clear view from nearby locations with open public access. The draft examination timetable at **Annex D** to this letter includes dates reserved for ASIs during the week of 8 June 2026, as well as a potential additional day during the week of 14 September 2026.

Interested Parties are therefore invited to submit suggested locations for the ExA to visit as part of an ASI by **Procedural Deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026)**.

It would be helpful if nominations could be sent separately from any other written submission. Nominations must include:

- sufficient information to identify the location
- the issues to be observed at the location
- the reason why the location has been suggested
- information on whether the site can be accessed via public land
- the reason why an unaccompanied site inspection would not suffice

The applicant is requested to prepare a draft itinerary for the ASI to be submitted by **procedural deadline B (Wednesday 1 April 2026)**. This should focus on private land to which access is required, taking account of:

- locations referred to in the relevant representations received
- any other locations at which the applicant has predicted likely significant environmental effects
- the locations suggested by interested parties submitted by procedural deadline A

Comments by interested parties on the applicant's draft itinerary must be submitted by **deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)**.

The ExA will consider each suggested site location, including those provided in the applicant's draft itinerary, to determine if it could be viewed from public land on an unaccompanied basis or if it is necessary to view it on an accompanied basis. The ExA will also consider if it would be appropriate to make arrangements for access only to be provided to specific sites such that they could be inspected as part of an unaccompanied site inspection on an access required basis.

The ExA will publish its final itinerary at least 5 working days before the date of the ASI.

Interested parties should be aware that ASIs are not an opportunity to make any oral representations to the ExA about the proposed development. However, participants may be invited by the ExA to indicate specific features or sites of interest.

5. Deadline for the submission of local impact reports (LIRs) and written representations (WRs)

A LIR is a report in writing giving details of the likely impact of a proposed development on a local authority's area (or any part of that area). For more information about the importance and content of LIRs, see our [Advice for Local Authorities](#).

The ExA requests LIRs from the host and neighbouring local authorities and welcomes LIRs from any other relevant local authorities defined in section 56A of the Planning Act 2008 who may wish to submit one.

In order to maximise the time available to examine the Application, we have made the procedural decision to request LIRs by **deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)**.

We have similarly made the procedural decision to request WRs from local authorities and all other IPs by the same deadline (**Friday 1 May 2026**).

We acknowledge that this deadline comes soon after the PM, however, by providing this early notice, we are ensuring that all IPs will have a reasonable time period in which to draft these documents before the deadline for submission.

For the avoidance of doubt, we wish to make clear to local authorities that LIRs and WRs are two separate documents and must be submitted separately and independently of each other. Any WRs that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary; this summary should not exceed 10% of the original text.

6. Document updates

a) Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker

The ExA notes the applicant's submission of a Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker (Examination Library reference [[APP-021](#)]). The submission of this document is useful to the ExA, however, the ExA would benefit from the table being expanded to include additional columns to identify the following information:

- the category of each affected person listed, taken from the Book of Reference (Cat 1, Cat 2)
- the interest of each affected person in the land (freehold owner, tenant, lessee, occupier)
- a brief description of the works proposed over the affected land parcels in a new column alongside the 'works no(s)' column (for example ancillary works, grid connection cable, highway works, and so on)
- 'status of objection' column showing either 'yes', 'no' or 'withdrawn', and if 'withdrawn' provide the date
- the likely duration of any temporary rights sought

The Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker should enable the ExA and SoS to easily interrogate the information and isolate those persons who have objected to the CA or TP of their rights and interests and who maintain an objection.

The Applicant should therefore submit a duplicate copy of the PDF Tracker in readable Excel spreadsheet format each time it is updated.

The ExA requests that the updated Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker in PDF and Excel formats is submitted into the examination at **procedural deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026)** and then at the subsequent deadlines set out in **Annex D** to this letter if changes are made to a previous version. A final version of the Land Rights and Negotiations Tracker should be provided at **deadline 7 (Friday 2 October 2026)**.

b) Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment Appendix

The ExA requests that the statutory biodiversity metric, which is included in the BNG Assessment Appendix [[APP-274](#)], is submitted by the applicant in an unlocked Excel spreadsheet format at **procedural deadline A (Monday 9 March 2026)**. If any changes are made to the metric during the examination, an updated copy should be submitted at the subsequent deadlines set out in **Annex D** to this letter.

c) Guide to the Application

The ExA requests that the applicant provides, at each deadline, an updated 'Guide to the Application' document in both clean and track change versions, which provides a list of the most up-to-date status of the documents submitted, including which copies (and Examination Library reference numbers) have been superseded in whole or in part. A final version must be

by **deadline 7 (Friday 2 October 2026)**. All examination documents submitted should include a version number and date.

d) Amendments to the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO)

Where the Applicant submits an amended dDCO at any deadline, the submission should include a new version number identifying that the submitted dDCO is an amended version. **Amended dDCOs submitted by the applicant must always be in clean and track change versions** and accompanied by:

- a) versions submitted in Microsoft Word
- b) an amended Explanatory Memorandum
- c) a consolidated schedule of changes listing all changes to the dDCO since the application version **[APP-016]**, when (including the version number) and for what purpose each change was introduced

At **deadline 7 (Friday 2 October 2026)** the applicant must provide the email notification from <https://publishing.legislation.gov.uk/validation> confirming the document has successfully passed validation, along with the PDF version of the SI validation report obtained from the link in the notification email. The applicant should also provide a clean (all tracking removed) standalone MS Word version of the dDCO, with no header or cover page.

e) Environmental Statement (ES) and other documents

In the event of revised versions of documents such as the ES (individual chapters or appendices) or other documents in the series numbered 7.1 to 7.26 being submitted, clean copies and copies showing tracked changes highlighting the changes made to the previous version of the document should be submitted. In instances of changes (other than minor typographical corrections) being made, a summary explanation of the reason(s) for those changes being made should also be provided.

7. Requests for a future open floor hearing (OFH)

IPs who wish to be heard at an OFH later in the examination should submit their request in writing to the Planning Inspectorate by **deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)**. If the ExA decides to hold a further OFH, adequate notice to all parties will be provided in line with Rule 13 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 (EPR).

8. Requests for a compulsory acquisition hearing (CAH)

Affected persons who wish to be heard at CAH later in the examination should make their requests to the Inspectorate by **deadline 1 (Friday 1 May 2026)**. The ExA may choose to hold a CAH even if it receives no requests. If the ExA decides to hold one or more CAH then it will give adequate notice to all parties, in line with Rule 13 of the EPR.

9. Acceptance of additional submissions

Since the application was accepted for examination, the ExA has exercised its discretion and made procedural decisions to accept the following additional submissions from the applicant:

- Corrected version of Environmental Statement Figure 8-14 Baseline Photography and Photomontages – Viewpoint 45 [\[AS-001\]](#)
- Response [\[AS-002\]](#) to the Planning Inspectorate's [s51 advice](#) following acceptance of the application for examination

The ExA has also exercised its discretion to accept additional submissions from other parties following the close of the relevant representations period [\[AS-003\]](#), [\[AS-004\]](#), [\[AS-005\]](#) and [\[AS-006\]](#).

As we move into the examination, the draft examination timetable includes a series of numbered deadlines for receipt of written submissions. Timely submissions received by the relevant deadline and that address its purpose will be accepted. **Documents received after the relevant deadline are only accepted at the discretion of the ExA and may not be accepted to ensure fairness to all parties.** Circumstances where documents are submitted late without good reason, causing inconvenience or delay to other parties can amount to unreasonable behaviour.

EXAMINATION DOCUMENTS

The application documents and relevant representations can be inspected on the [project webpage](#).

How to stay up to date

All further documents submitted in the course of the examination will also be published the [documents page](#) of the project webpage.

You can also sign up to get [email updates](#).

If you have any questions about the process, examination events or how to access the documents, you can email limedown@planninginspectorate.gov.uk or contact us on 0303 444 5000.

The Examination Library

For ease of navigation, please refer to the [Examination Library](#) which is accessible by clicking the link at the top of the [documents page](#). The Examination Library is updated regularly throughout the examination.

The Examination Library records and provides a hyperlink to:

- each application document
- each representation made to the examination
- each procedural decision made by the ExA

Each document is given a unique reference which will be fixed for the duration of the examination. **Please quote the unique reference number from the Examination Library when referring to any examination documents in any future submissions that you make.**

INFORMATION ABOUT THE 'HAVE YOUR SAY' PAGE

The [Have your say page](#) is available on the [project webpage](#).

You will need to enter your unique reference number ('Your ref' found at the top your letter or email from the Planning Inspectorate). If you are making a submission on behalf of another person or organisation, and do have not your own unique reference number, then you should enter the unique reference number of the person or organisation you are representing. If you are not a registered interested party then it is at the discretion of the ExA whether or not your submission is accepted.

Submissions will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the close of the relevant deadline. For further information about publishing submissions please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

You will be able to submit a document (upload file), make a text representation or both. It is possible to upload multiple files for each individual submission item. Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with the subject title and not exceed 50MB.

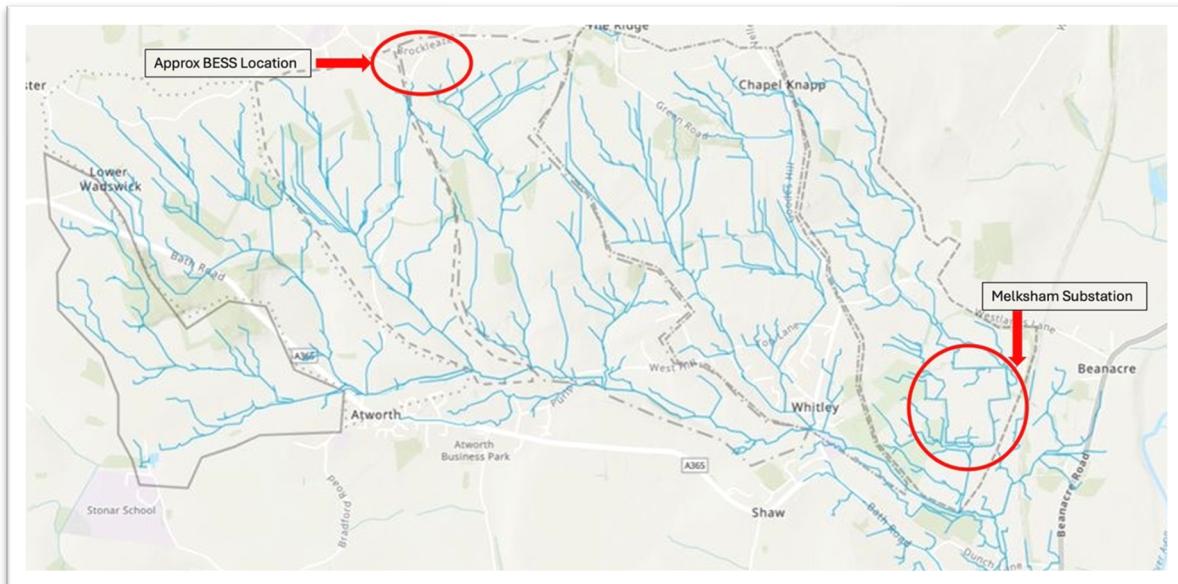
Submissions **must not include hyperlinks** to documents/ evidence hosted on a third party website (for example technical reports, media articles and so on). See The Planning Inspectorate's [Advice for members of the public: Advice for submitting representations or comments](#) for important information about making written submissions. All submissions must be made in a format that can be viewed in full on the Find a National Infrastructure Project website. Any submissions that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary; this summary should not exceed 10% of the original text.

You should select the relevant deadline for your submission and then, on the next webpage, select the appropriate submission item as described in the examination timetable at **Annex D** to this letter. Please ensure you make a separate submission for each submission item and **do not duplicate your submission**. If you consider that your submission does not fit the description of any of the submission items then please select the submission item 'Other' and ensure that it is titled appropriately.

If you experience any issues when using the [Have your say page](#) please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter and they will assist.



Brockleaze BESS



South Brook Catchment. Source: Bristol Avon Rivers Trust. Annotated by CAWS.

Sixth Addendum to CAWS Document Dated 22 August 2025

PL/2025/05552
**Brockleaze Battery Energy Storage System with
associated infrastructure**

7 February 2026

1. Status and Purpose of This Addendum

This document constitutes the Sixth Addendum to the formal objection submitted by Community Action: Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) in August 2025 in respect of planning application PL/2025/05552.

It should be read alongside, and forms part of, CAWS' original objection and all subsequent addenda, all of which remain material and extant.

This Sixth Addendum is submitted to place before the Local Planning Authority material developments and evidence that has come to light since the Fifth Addendum, including updated National Energy System Operator (NESO) data, the implementation of NESO Connections Reform, recent Planning Inspectorate decisions concerning grid connection uncertainty, and the Wiltshire Council Relevant Representation regarding Lime Down Solar. These matters go directly to the principle, justification and lawfulness of determining the Brockleaze proposal.

While CAWS notes that the public consultation period for this application has now closed, the information set out in this Sixth Addendum constitutes material considerations for the purposes of determination and materially affects the planning balance. In the interests of sound, lawful and informed decision-making, CAWS submits that it is in the public interest for this information to be placed before, and taken into account by, the Local Planning Authority.

2. Absence of Demonstrable System Need

2.1 NESO confirms sufficient BESS capacity already exists.

NESO data confirms that:

- the UK already has over 52 GW of operational, under-construction or consented BESS capacity;
- this equates to approximately 184–195 % of Government targets for 2030 and 2035;
- the SSE region already exceeds even the most ambitious net-zero scenarios; and
- only a very small proportion of BESS capacity is considered “system-essential”.

In circumstances where national and regional Battery Energy Storage capacity already exceeds identified system requirements, and where the proposed development carries no demonstrable near-term operational role or public benefit, there is no planning basis for attributing positive weight to the proposal as energy infrastructure. Once system need is absent, the proposal must be assessed on the basis of its impacts alone, with no residual presumption arising from energy or decarbonisation policy objectives.

2.2 NESO Connections Reform removes any justification for additional BESS

NESO's Connections Reform states explicitly that:

- there are approximately three times more battery projects than the grid can accommodate;
- no further battery projects will be allowed until the existing backlog is rationalised; and

- the reform process is intended to prevent speculative over-connection and clustering at constrained nodes.

This removes any credible basis for asserting that additional standalone BESS schemes are required to support grid stability or decarbonisation objectives.

2.3 Brockleaze connection date of 2037 is unprotected and speculative

The Brockleaze scheme appears on the NESO TEC Register with a provisional connection date of 2037 and is recorded at “Scoping” status, with no planning permission granted and no protected or confirmed connection agreement in place.

As a result, the stated connection date is indicative only and may be displaced, delayed or removed entirely through NESO Connections Reform and queue rationalisation. The proposal therefore relies on an unsecured and speculative grid position, which cannot reasonably be relied upon as a basis for planning approval.

A development with such a remote and unprotected connection:

- does not address any near-term system requirement;
- cannot credibly be justified on Clean Power 2030 grounds; and
- attracts minimal weight when balanced against present and cumulative harm.

2.4 Planning Balance once need is absent

Where there is no identified requirement for additional Battery Energy Storage capacity, the planning balance shifts decisively toward the assessment of impacts. In this context, the proposal would introduce large-scale industrial infrastructure on an undeveloped greenfield site, and cumulative effects relating to safety, environmental protection, landscape capacity and infrastructure constraints become determinative. Brockleaze fails that test and cannot be justified by reference to any claimed energy or decarbonisation benefit.

2.5 Planning Inspectorate position on grid uncertainty and incomplete applications

In the Tween Bridge Solar Farm planning application case, the Planning Inspectorate has set out clear and directly relevant principles regarding grid connection uncertainty and the basis of progressing applications on the basis of unresolved or speculative grid arrangements.

In correspondence dated 15 January 2026, the Examining Authority confirmed that grid connection uncertainty is not a peripheral or technical matter, but a principal issue that goes to the adequacy of the application and the validity of the assessment undertaken. The Inspector explicitly noted that the application before him lacked a grid connection as part of the draft Development Consent Order, and identified this absence as one of the principal issues for examination. He further warned that delays or changes to grid connection assumptions may have significant implications for the Environmental Statement, including the relevance and reliability of surveys, assessments and construction assumptions that were predicated on an earlier connection date.

Critically, the Examining Authority stated that it was not clear why the applicant could not withdraw and resubmit the application once grid connection issues were resolved, noting that doing so would allow any revised application to incorporate a defined grid connection and ensure that the environmental assessment was properly aligned with the actual scheme to be delivered. This reflects a clear Inspectorate expectation that applications should not proceed where essential grid infrastructure is unresolved, unassessed or deferred, as doing so risks abortive work, uncertainty for affected parties and an unsound decision-making process.

The relevance to the Brockleaze proposal is direct and compelling. Brockleaze relies on an unprotected and speculative grid position, recorded on the NESO TEC Register at "Scoping" status, with a provisional connection date of 2037, no planning permission and no confirmed or protected connection agreement. In addition, the application excludes the grid connection cable route entirely, preventing assessment of construction impacts, flood risk, groundwater protection, landscape effects and cumulative disturbance. Taken together, this places Brockleaze squarely within the category of schemes that the Planning Inspectorate has indicated should not be determined on an incomplete or speculative basis, but instead should be revised and resubmitted once essential grid matters are resolved and capable of lawful assessment.

3. Consistency with Lime Down and Recent Planning Decisions

3.1 Consistency with Wiltshire Council's Lime Down position

Wiltshire Council has raised formal concerns regarding cumulative impact, BESS scale, infrastructure saturation and limited landscape capacity in relation to the Lime Down Solar Park.

The Brockleaze BESS exceeds the Lime Down BESS in stored energy and container count, draws on the same Melksham Substation, and contributes to the same cumulative hydrological, safety and emergency-response risks. It would be inconsistent for Wiltshire Council to oppose or caution against BESS impacts at Lime Down while supporting a larger standalone BESS within the same constrained cluster. CAWS therefore calls for consistency in Wiltshire Council's approach and decision making.

4. Location Suitability – Even if NESO Were Overridden

Even if national policy were to override NESO's position on battery oversupply, there is no justification for locating additional large-scale BESS within a hydrologically sensitive, infrastructure-saturated rural cluster when numerous brownfield and industrial grid-connected sites exist elsewhere. The choice of this location is therefore not driven by net-zero necessity but by commercial convenience.

5. Conclusion

The Brockleaze BESS proposal has no demonstrable national or regional system need, in circumstances where National Energy System Operator (NESO) evidence confirms that battery storage capacity already exceeds identified requirements. The proposal relies on an unprotected and speculative grid position, recorded on the NESO TEC Register at "Scoping" status with a provisional connection date of 2037, and excludes essential enabling infrastructure - including the grid connection cable route - from assessment.

In an area already subject to strategic saturation of energy infrastructure, the application proceeds on a site-by-site basis that fails to assess cumulative and non-linear impacts affecting shared systems, including hydrology, landscape capacity, safety and emergency response. These deficiencies are not matters of detail: they prevent a lawful and precautionary assessment of the proposal and place it in direct conflict with the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2.

Once system need is absent, there is no planning basis for attributing positive weight to the proposal as energy infrastructure. In the absence of overriding public benefit, and given the scale of cumulative harm, unresolved grid uncertainty and procedural incompleteness identified above, the Brockleaze proposal cannot be supported.

CAWS therefore respectfully requests that planning permission be refused.

Annex A

CAWS Objection History

The documents set out below represent the totality of the CAWS submission as at 07 January 2026 and should be considered collectively. Please note that the summaries set out below are highly abridged.

Submission	Summary	Page Count	Word Count
22 August 2025	<p>The project is presented by the developer as a renewable and low-carbon energy development, but that is misleading. The BESS will not generate renewable energy; neither is it connected to a renewable source of energy. In fact, it may increase our reliance on fossil fuels. The scheme would therefore be better described as a high-carbon industrial development, with negligible local employment benefits, in a greenfield location.</p> <p>The developer's fire safety strategy is non-compliant with UK National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidance, and it vastly underestimates its own water and containment requirements.</p> <p>The site sits in a Source Protection Zone near aquifers and flood-prone villages. The drainage and containment plans are inadequate, risking catastrophic contamination of a wide area.</p> <p>Noise mitigation is unproven. The site overlaps with Park Lane Mine, with no evidence of any assessment having been done by the developer of the effects of vibration, weight and traffic conflicts.</p> <p>Construction is unlikely to start before 2030, with grid connection not expected until 2037, making the application premature.</p> <p>Inadequate construction, traffic, and decommissioning plans have been submitted, leaving the application incomplete.</p> <p>No mitigation or coordination plan has been provided for concurrent projects.</p> <p>No community benefits are offered.</p> <p>CAWS' consultation inputs have largely been ignored.</p>	21	6,523

	<p>A further round of public consultation is requested, once the cable route is defined.</p> <p>CAWS urges Wiltshire Council to seek independent expert advice.</p>		
First Addendum 02 September 2025	<p>The application is largely non-compliant with planning policies including those set out in the NPPF, Wiltshire Core Strategy, draft Wiltshire Local Plan, and the made Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2.</p>	14	2,543
Second Addendum 03 October 2025	<p>The inclusion of two water tanks to replace two fire hydrants makes no material change to CAWS previous submissions.</p> <p>The Fire Strategy Plan is incomplete.</p> <p>The proposed tank calculations are inconsistent.</p> <p>The tanks do not have sufficient capacity.</p>	3	1,091
Third Addendum 06 October 2025	<p>Evidence that the Brockleaze BESS will not contribute to net zero.</p>	3	979
Fourth Addendum 07 October 2025	<p>CAWS Submission History.</p>	3	472
Fifth Addendum 07 January 2026	<p>CAWS objects to the Brockleaze proposal because it would introduce a large-scale, standalone Battery Energy Storage System into an already saturated cluster of energy infrastructure centred on Melksham Substation, where Wiltshire Council has acknowledged that landscape and system capacity is extremely limited. The proposal is mischaracterised as renewable energy despite not generating electricity, not being intrinsically linked to renewable generation, and delivering negligible long-term employment or socio-economic benefit.</p> <p>Evidence assembled by CAWS demonstrates that sufficient Battery Energy Storage capacity is already deployed to meet Firm Frequency Response and grid-balancing requirements, and that additional large-scale BESS capacity is not required to maintain grid stability. In this context, reliance on site-by-site assessment and assumptions of effectively unlimited capacity in shared systems — including hydrology, groundwater, emergency services and transport — fails to address cumulative and non-linear impacts and materially underestimates risk. There is therefore no justification for</p>	16	5057

	accepting elevated environmental, safety or cumulative harm in this location		
Sixth Addendum 7 February 2026	The Sixth Addendum updates and reinforces matters raised previously in light of material new evidence and authoritative guidance, including updated NESO data, the implementation of NESO Connections Reform, recent Planning Inspectorate decisions on grid uncertainty, and representations relating to the Lime Down Solar NSIP. It confirms that the Brockleaze proposal has no demonstrable system need, relies on an unprotected and speculative grid position with a provisional 2037 connection date, excludes essential enabling infrastructure from assessment, and cannot be lawfully determined without a cumulative impact assessment. The Sixth Addendum concludes that, once system need is absent, there is no planning basis for attributing positive weight to the proposal and that planning permission should be refused.	9	2177
	Total	69	18,842

Annex B

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
CAWS	Community Action: Whitley and Shaw
CP	Core Policy (Wiltshire Core Strategy)
DCO	Development Consent Order
DWFRS	Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service
EA	Environment Agency
EN-1	National Policy Statement for Energy (Overarching Energy)
EN-3	National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure
FRA	Flood Risk Assessment
FRR	Firm Frequency Response
GW	Gigawatt
LFP	Lithium Iron Phosphate (battery chemistry)
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MW	Megawatt
MWh	Megawatt hour
NFCC	National Fire Chiefs Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
SPZ	Source Protection Zone
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Act 1990
UK	United Kingdom

Teresa Strange

From: Thomas, Dave <Dave.Thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 03 February 2026 12:36
To: Teresa Strange
Cc: phil.alford@wiltshire.gov.uk; Corps, Kimberly
Subject: FW: Follow up after meeting to discuss highway concerns of cumulative cable routes to Melksham substation and streetworks issues

Teresa,

Your message to Kim has been passed to me for response. I've added comments in red to your text below that I hope you will find helpful.

Regards

David M Thomas IEng MICE
Head of Highways Asset Management and Commissioning

01225713312

Dear Kim

Further to the recent meeting on Cumulative Impact of proposed energy schemes etc, I am following up with the original request (below), as you said at the meeting that you were unaware of the highways issues.

Since then, there has been the commencement of a 9-week road closure on Westlands Lane in Beanacre. We are grateful that this road closure includes two cable route schemes and the two contractors working together under one road closure; thank you for Wiltshire Council ensuring this work happened together.

The work commenced earlier in the week on Monday 26th January. There has been absolutely no usual street works notification that we routinely see and share widely. **Verdant Energy, SSE and AUREOS are responsible for public engagement, WC do not routinely inform residents of works by statutory undertakers, that is their choice.** We did ask about this when the work first started at the end of last year, with no notice either. The contractors send out letters, they rely on the post which arrives after the work has started, and certainly after road signage advising of the closure which puts the residents and the local councillors in a really difficult position as they have no idea of the scope of works and restrictions etc; and residents who use those roads as part of their daily commute are not aware as live wider than the letter drop. **I believe the scope of the works and dates regarding road closure has been communicated direct with yourselves by the works promoters and explained at the public drop-in sessions.**

Can you please advise why we don't get the usual notification, we would if it was for highways work, and even for urgent utility works. This enables residents to plan for longer journeys, access for building work, changes to bus routes etc etc rather than coming across the road closure on the day. **For road closures all works promoters including statutory undertakers are obliged to inform frontagers within the extents of a closure regarding the works and access.** We are advised this was completed by first class mail on the 9th January 2026. The TTRO for this closure was circulated on the 26th November 2025 to Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without PC including their respective Wiltshire Councillors. Advanced warning signs were placed at either end of Westlands Lane advising of the road closure, these were placed on the 10th January 2026.

The two contractors did hold public drop-in sessions, after much pressure and persuasion from the local council/lors and they have been very misleading for residents, and some scant or wrong information presented – one of the info boards showed connecting to a site in Norfolk. Still no sign of promised website with information and FAQs.

Whilst we understand that these are utility works, and the contractors have a statutory right to undertake the work, we don't understand why they are treated differently from other Street Works and feel they should be under the same scrutiny, and for these multiple cable route works on the highways, the cumulative impact taken into account and a level of scrutiny, co-ordination and encouragement by Wiltshire Council for effective community engagement. **To the contrary these schemes by SSE and Verdant Energy have been scrutinised more than most planned works and as a result works on Westland Lane have been coordinated to happen at the same time minimising long term disruption. WC have also been very proactive in encouraging Verdant Energy, SSE and AUREOS to engage more proactively with residents.**

We are aware that Wessex Water have to close Westlands Lane to repair a water leak and will have to close the road and have told residents it will be in 3 months' time, just when its re-opened again. **WC are not aware of any planned works by Wessex Water that need a road closure of Westlands Lane, any such works would need 3 months advance notification to our street works team.**

We have a comprehensive list of highways improvements that could be implemented as community benefit from these contractors to go some way of compensating for the impact that this is having on residents' daily life and want to discuss how we best go about getting these implemented as Wiltshire Council is the local highway authority. **We understand SSE and Verdant are awaiting a list of benefits from you for their consideration. While WC supports community benefit initiatives, it would be inappropriate to impose such expectations on statutory undertakers in this context.** We also want to understand what conditions there are for the repair to the highways from all of these works. **Reinstatement of these works will be in accordance with the Specification for the Reinforcement of Openings in Highways 4th edition, which is a statutory code all statutory undertakers must comply with.**

From: Corps, Kimberly <Kimberly.Corps@wiltshire.gov.uk>

Sent: 30 January 2026 09:13

To: Thomas, Dave <Dave.Thomas@wiltshire.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: Follow up after meeting to discuss highway concerns of cumulative cable routes to Melksham substation and streetworks issues

Hi Dave,

I have received the query below from Teresa Strange, is this something your team can help with please?

Kind regards,

Kim

Kimberly Corps
Head of Service, Transport Policy and Strategy

Wiltshire Council

Tel: 01225 770222

Email: kimberly.corps@wiltshire.gov.uk

Website: www.wiltshire.gov.uk

[Sign up](#) to Wiltshire Council's email news service

From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>

Sent: 29 January 2026 15:00

To: Corps, Kimberly <Kimberly.Corps@wiltshire.gov.uk>

Community energy in Corsham and the surrounding areas - have your say

Tell us what you think about the possibility of having a solar farm or wind turbine in your area, that is owned by and for the benefit of local people.

Opportunity to win a £25 voucher for Love2Shop in a prize draw!

Purpose of the survey On 25 November, Bath and West Community Energy, Corsham Climate Action, the Centre for Sustainable Energy, and Wiltshire Council held a forum event at Pound Arts where we asked attendees some questions about community energy. The forum provided the opportunity to discuss possible areas of interest for a community owned renewables project in Corsham and surrounding areas. The event pulled together a combination of technical evidence and local knowledge about what could be suitable. The purpose of this survey is to find out what other people in the area think about these questions. To see the information provided at the forum event please click here <https://centreforsustainableenergy.ams3.digitaloceanspaces.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/22090102/Corsham-Forum-Event-Summary-Nov-25-1.pdf>

This is our **second survey** on community energy in the Corsham area. The first survey was live September-December 2025 and was a response to a workshop held on 3 July 2025 at Corsham Town Hall. If you completed that first survey, we would encourage you to complete this one as well to help us understand any next steps for the area.

What happens next? Based on the responses to this survey and at the forum event, we will be deciding if there is appetite in Corsham and surrounding areas to pursue a community energy project. If there is, we will be looking at 2-3 geographic areas that we can do further feasibility work on to see if there is technical potential for a renewables site to be built in the future. If there is strong community interest and some possible areas that could be developed in the future, we will support the community to form a steering group and apply for funding to continue researching, speaking to local people, and planning next steps.

About the project

This project helps local people explore and develop renewable energy projects, like wind turbines or solar farms (depending on what is suitable in your area), that bring direct benefits to their communities. It is a partnership project lead by the Centre for Sustainable Energy, working with Wiltshire Council, Nadder Community Energy, Bath and West Community Energy and Zero North Wiltshire Community Energy. It is funded by the Energy Industry Voluntary Redress Scheme.

Consent By taking part in this survey you are giving permission for CSE to store, analyse and process the survey response. A summary of the data (e.g. not with individual responses shown) will be shared with project partners including Bath and West Community Energy, Wiltshire Council, and Praxis (evaluation partner).

This survey takes five to ten minutes to complete. **The survey deadline has been extended to Sunday 15 February at midnight.**

1

"Community energy puts people at the heart of the energy system. It brings them together to take democratic climate action by understanding, generating, owning, using, and saving energy. Community energy provides clear accountability and participatory governance within the energy system, which is empowering, transparent and equitable." - Community Energy England.

An example of a community energy project could be a wind turbine that sells energy back to the electricity grid, and uses the profit to pay for improving services in a local community - <https://ambitioncommunityenergy.org/>

Would you like to see a community energy project in the Corsham area? *

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

2

If you answered 'unsure' to the previous question, please explain why. *

The Wiltshire Council website says,

"It's not just about meeting net zero goals; it's about creating a future that communities support and directly benefit from.

FEL is a community engagement approach to develop and gain support for local renewable energy plans.

FEL puts communities in the driving seat of local energy planning.

FEL workshops create space for honest conversations about local energy needs, concerns, and opportunities.

The Corsham event is for those who live and work in the Corsham area. People can sign up online."

Melksham Without Parish Council do not believe that you have consulted with the actual community that these proposals will affect, i.e., those just south of the southern Corsham boundary.

It does not feel that you have put them in the driving seat or had honest conversations. In fact, we found out about this by accident; it was very much pitched and advertised to Corsham residents about Corsham, and that is felt to be more disingenuous than honest by the local residents.

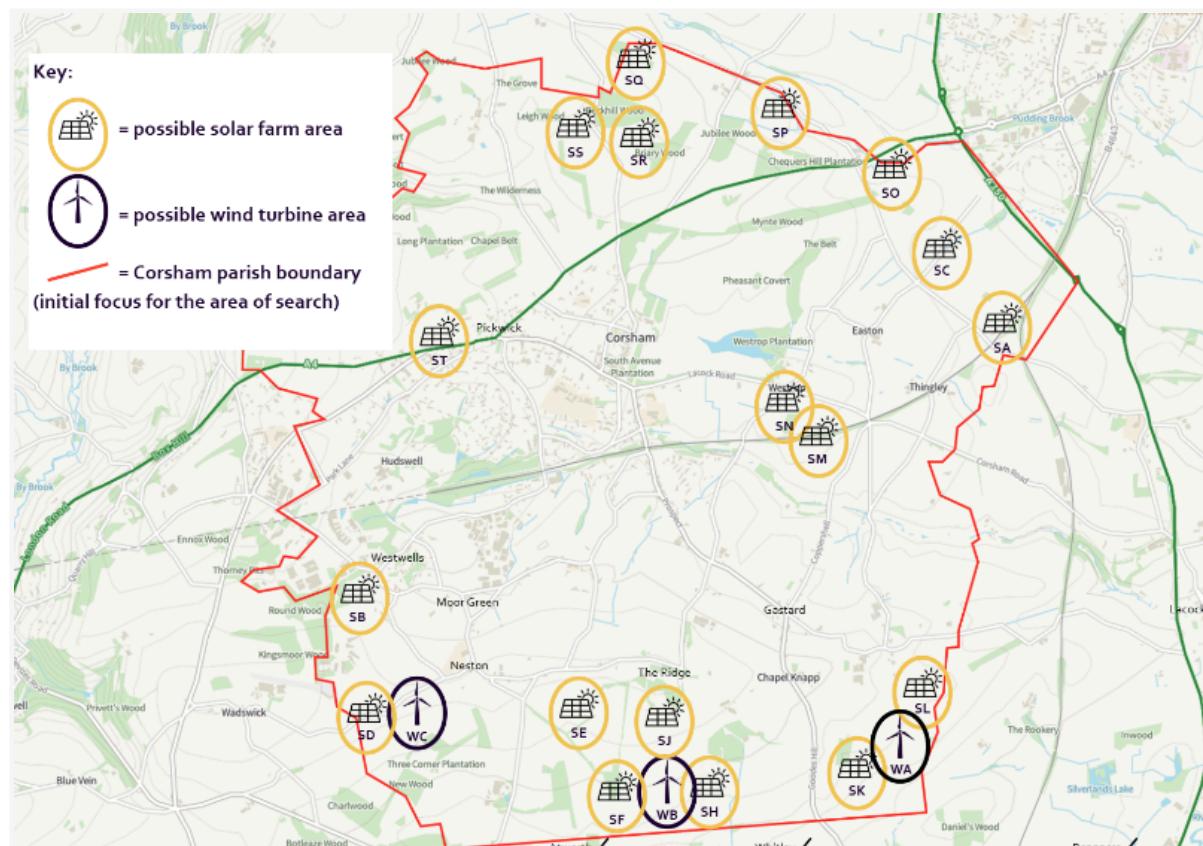
Melksham Without Parish Council does not support:

- Cumulative impact
- Saturation
- Lack of consultation
- Unmitigated risks:
 - Contextual policy used to frame unrelated development positively
 - Strategic signalling of further schemes
 - Public statements are vulnerable to misinterpretation
- Erosion of public trust

3

Looking at this map of possible areas that may be suitable for a wind turbine or solar farm, please indicate up to three areas you would like us to look into further. Based on the responses to the survey and other engagement we will decide a) if there are any areas we should do further research on, and b) which 2 or 3 areas have the most community support for this research to be conducted.

Please note that if any area is pursued as part of a real renewables project it would be subject to further consultation and the planning process would be followed. *



WA

WB

WC

SA

SB

SC

SD

SE

SF

SH

SJ

SK

SL SM SN SO SP SQ SR SS ST None of the above

4

Please share any comments in relation to your choices in the previous question.

Melksham Without parish council does NOT support the suggested Future Energy Landscape locations along the Roman Road in the immediate north of the parish boundary.

5

We want to speak to a wide selection of people in the local area. Do you have any suggestions for next steps and further engagement? *

Melksham Without Parish Council requests to be proactively consulted with (CAWS Community Action: Whitley & Shaw) without having to "pull" information from Wiltshire Council.

Better engagement with Melksham Without Parish Council & CAWS, who could share resources for you - but they were only supplied to us by Corsham Town Council - none of the posters, QR codes, etc. were sent to us that I can find or can download from the website. We have noticeboards, use local cafes for consultations, WhatsApp groups and social media channels. We have an active residents action group CAWS (Community Action: Whitley & Shaw) that could also have been contacted, as well as the Connect magazine that goes to every house in Shaw & Whitley and the Melksham Independent News that goes free of charge to 13000+ houses in the Melksham area - this includes Shaw, Whitley and Beanacre that will be affected (And Semington that we border with in the south west which is the next pilot coming forward). The paper could have an article, an advert and you could use them to do a leaflet drop in selected areas - they deliver every fortnight.

6

Do you have any questions or additional comments?

The sites are mainly on the outskirts of Corsham, and therefore you must do more to actively engage the community they will actually affect, and could potentially benefit from them - rather than at present, which feels like they are pushed on to other communities by Corsham residents, but will be reaping the benefits. The cumulative impact on the residents in the north of Melksham Without is very keenly felt, and this compounds it further. You are now beginning to consult on the next pilot, the parish borders Semington in the south, and it feels as if you are consulting those around us, but not us. We thank you for sending the poster for upcoming Semington consultation.

Prize draw

7

Would you like to be included in the prize draw to be in with a chance of winning a £25 shopping voucher? *

Yes please

No thank you

8

If you'd like to be in the prize draw to win a £25 shopping voucher, please provide your email address. This will only be used by the Centre for Sustainable Energy to contact you about the voucher draw, and will not be connected to your survey response. If you want to find out more about how we use and protect your data, please see our privacy policy: <https://www.cse.org.uk/how-we-use-your-information/> *

clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk to pass to CAWS for future fundraising event

Staying in touch

We're looking for local people who'd be interested in being part of a group to help move a community energy project forward if there is interest in the area.

This section asks if you'd like to stay in touch about this. **Sharing your email address will not affect the**

anonymity of your survey response or optional demographic details (next section), that information will be kept separately.

9

Would you be interested in being part of a working group to help move a project forward, if the area moves forward with a project? *

Yes - I consent to sharing my email address with Centre for Sustainable Energy

No

10

What is your email address? *

clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

Demographic information

The Centre for Sustainable Energy and Bath and West Community Energy would like to collect some demographic data. This helps us understand who has responded to the survey and therefore who the views shared represent. If any group in the community is under-represented, we can do further outreach to get their input. This information is anonymous and is not connected to your survey response.

It won't be used to identify you individually and we have a 'prefer not to say' option on all the demographic questions. If you don't want to share any demographic information please select 'skip demographic questions' below.

If you want to find out more about how we use and protect your data, please see our privacy policies. CSE: <https://www.cse.org.uk/how-we-use-your-information/> BWCE: <https://www.bwce.coop/privacy-policy/>

11

Please confirm what information you'd like to share *

I consent - go to demographic questions

I don't consent - skip demographic questions

Teresa Strange

From: Burvill, Victoria <Victoria.Burvill@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 February 2026 10:29
To: Teresa Strange
Cc: Peter Richardson; phil.alford@wiltshire.gov.uk; Trigwell, Lynn
Subject: RE: Corsham FEL forum follow up survey ready to share!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Teresa

Thanks for your message. I'm sorry the below e-mail may have given the impression that Melksham Without has missed out, but I don't think this is the case. As you have said, the original e-mail to Corsham was not included, and I have not seen that but I will try to clarify.

We took on board your comments at the meeting in November and we shared how to get involved in the FEL project. The information has been kept up to date on our website, and this has been available for you to share with residents. We have made sure that Melksham Without is included on our list of stakeholders / distribution list.

Now that we have reached a further milestone of the project, following the 'Forum' workshop in Corsham a new survey is being promoted. David Martin will have directly received texts and images to help with the promotion, as Corsham Town Council is directly involved in the project. This does not mean Melksham has been missed, just that Corsham is a key partner in terms of comms and has received the material to enable them to share through their networks and social media.

Additional town and parish councils will receive the information directly, if this hasn't already happened.

In addition, the FEL briefing note to all councillors is another direct communication to all local councils, intended to provide an update about the project and to describe how you can help to get the message out locally. i.e.

We would be really grateful if you could:

Promote engagement

Please share our upcoming press releases and social media content through your networks, newsletters, and social channels. We have a press release and social posts scheduled for January which you can share.

- **Encourage attendance**

Invite residents, businesses, and community groups to attend the workshops and contribute their views.

- **Participate in workshops**

Your presence will demonstrate leadership and help ensure local voices are heard.

- **Provide feedback**

Share any insights from your communities that could inform the project. Share ideas of how best to engage the community in your area, e.g. existing groups, events or communication channels that could be used.

Wiltshire Council is also publishing additional social media comms, and there is an article in last Friday's e-newsletter, which can be shared.

The FEL briefing includes a link to the webpage [Renewable energy - Wiltshire Council](#) which has all the current information on it, including links to what David has sent to you.

I hope that helps to explain.

Kind regards
Vicky

Victoria Burvill
Climate Manager (Strategy)

Wiltshire Council



Phone: 01225 713362

Email: Victoria.Burvill@wiltshire.gov.uk

Web: www.wiltshire.gov.uk

From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>

Sent: 29 January 2026 16:18

To: Burvill, Victoria <Victoria.Burvill@wiltshire.gov.uk>; Trigwell, Lynn <Lynn.Trigwell@wiltshire.gov.uk>

Cc: Peter Richardson <peter.richardson@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>; Alford, Phil <Phil.Alford@wiltshire.gov.uk>

Subject: FW: Corsham FEL forum follow up survey ready to share!

Some people who received this message don't often get email from clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi Lynn and Vicky

Further to our meeting on Cumulative Impact and the proposed FEL schemes, I raised that we had not been in a position to be aware of the Corsham specific events to be able to attend and participate and that we would be forwarded information when available.

I am in receipt of the generic FEL communication to all parish and town councils, but have been sent the attached from Corsham Town Council; none of this specific information was sent to Melksham Without parish council.

Can we please be sent this information in the future, as agreed?

I can't see the original email to Corsham Town Council to see if there was further info to go with it.

Many thanks,

Teresa

Teresa Strange
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Melksham Without Parish Council
First Floor
Melksham Community Campus
Market Place, Melksham
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES
01225 705700
www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk

Wellbeing Statement I may send emails outside office hours but never with any expectation of response. Please just get back to me when you can within your own working hours. Thank you.

Want to keep in touch?

Follow us on facebook: Melksham Without Parish Council or Teresa Strange (Clerk) for additional community news
On X: @melkshamwithout

Teresa Strange

From: LeQuesne, Caroline <Caroline.LeQuesne@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 February 2026 17:57
To: Teresa Strange
Subject: Re: FEL: Staverton, Hilperton, Semington & G Hinton
Attachments: Staverton workshop poster.pdf

I have sent it to the parishes etc and asked them to publicise, but here is the poster with the info

Regards,

Caroline

Caroline Le Quesne
Engagement and Partnership Lead, Central (Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Warminster, Melksham, Devizes and Pewsey)
Communities - Engagement & Partnerships

Wiltshire Council

M:07876131170

EWeb: www.wiltshire.gov.uk

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From: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 February 2026 5:41 PM
To: LeQuesne, Caroline <Caroline.LeQuesne@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: FEL: Staverton, Hilperton, Semington & G Hinton

Thanks Caroline
We definitely border Semington, will look out for it.
How will we see it?
Thanks, Teresa

From: LeQuesne, Caroline <Caroline.LeQuesne@wiltshire.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 February 2026 17:35
To: Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: FEL: Staverton, Hilperton, Semington & G Hinton

Hiya,

I know you've been to talking to the climate team about the FEL project- just wanted to let you know that promotion will be going out for the workshop covering **Staverton, Hilperton, Semington & G Hinton** and whilst I know some of these aren't anywhere near your patch just wanted to make you aware of the ones slightly closer.

Do let me know if you'd like any more info.

Regards,

Caroline

Caroline Le Quesne

Engagement and Partnership Lead, Central (Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge, Warminster, Melksham, Devizes and Pewsey)
Communities - Engagement & Partnerships

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Workshop on energy in your community

Explore renewable energy in **Staverton, Hilperton, Semington and Great Hinton**, and see how it could benefit, or be owned by, the local community.

Tuesday 17 March
6pm-8.30pm

Semington Village Hall,
High Street, Semington
BA14 6JR

Everyone is welcome -
you don't need any prior
knowledge. There will be
a **complimentary buffet**.
Please **sign up** if you can.

For more event info contact
communities@cse.org.uk
or call **0117 934 1400**.



Scan to book or visit
shorturl.at/zPNza

Hosted in
partnership

AGEM with TEM 09e - Semington workshop poster FEL



Bath & West
Community
Energy

Wiltshire Council

 Centre for
Sustainable
Energy

Fiona Dey

From: Teresa Strange
Sent: 13 February 2026 17:16
To: Teresa Strange; Fiona Dey
Subject: Spotted on Linked iN

Categories: Planning

 **Planning Inspectorate** ... X
31,339 followers
23h • 

 New regulations laid by government to achieve a faster, more efficient planning appeals process

Changes to regulations have been made which ensure more appeals will go through a simplified process from 1 April.

Key information:

- The changes will apply to the majority of written representations
- By accepting only evidence previously submitted to local planning authorities the appeal process is streamlined, reducing duplication and removing the need for statements
- Changes to regulations come into effect from 1 April 2026 so will affect planning applications made from that date onwards.

Why the change?

- Quicker decisions
- Less bureaucracy
- "Submit once, submit right" principle
- Keeping decisions local by encouraging comprehensive submissions at application stage

More information can be found in our updated procedural guide: <https://lnkd.in/e8E5D9G7>



Planning appeals: procedural guide. For appeals relating to applications dated on or after 1 April 2026.
[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

Teresa Strange
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer
Melksham Without Parish Council
First Floor