

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish
Council held on Monday 11th August 2025 at Melksham Without Parish
Council Offices**

**(First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12 6ES
at 7:00pm**

Present: Councillors Richard Wood (Committee Chair), Alan Baines (Committee Vice-Chair), John Glover, Mark Harris, David Pafford, Peter Richardson and Martin Franks.

Officers: Teresa Strange (Clerk) and Fiona Dey (Parish Officer)

In attendance: Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder
Melksham Town Councillor Saffi Rabey
2 members of the public
Councillor Tony Hemmings joined the meeting as an observer

On Zoom: There was one member of the public joining remotely via Zoom.

195/25 Welcome, Housekeeping and Announcements:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. As there were no new members of the public present at the meeting, the housekeeping messages were not read out. Everyone present was aware that the meeting was being recorded and would be published on YouTube following the meeting and deleted once the minutes were approved.

196/25 Apologies:

There were no apologies as all members of the Planning Committee were present.

Apologies were received from Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford

197/25 Declarations of Interest:

a. Declarations of Interest

None declared

b. Dispensation Requests for this Meeting:

None requested.

198/25 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature:

No items to be discussed in closed session.

199/25 Public Participation:

No members of the public nor Wiltshire Councillor Holder wanted to make any comments.

It was agreed to move item 6e up the agenda.

200/25 Planning Applications: The Council considered the following applications and made the following comments:

- a) **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.

Comments: Object

Members felt strongly that this application should be refused for the same reasons as for application PL/2024/07097 Land south of Snarlton Farm (300 dwellings), which was refused at the Strategic Planning committee on 5th August 2025.

Decision reason for PL/2024/07907:

“The development as proposed, would materially conflict with the Council's strategic core policies CP1, CP2 and CP15 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, as well as significantly and demonstrably conflicting with the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2, which allocates other land for housing (as made on 4 August 2025) and that the benefits of the development would not outweigh the aforesaid Plan conflicts and that the application is hereby refused in full compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 14”

Wiltshire Council's current Core Strategy, and its emerging Local Plan do not include this site as a strategic allocation. The application is speculative and not in either the recently made Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan 2 or the emerging Wiltshire Council Local Plan of which the site was considered as it has been a SHELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment)¹ site for some time. There is no allocation for Melksham in the adopted Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (adopted February 2020). The current Core Strategy sets out policies until 2026, and the housing allocation for the Melksham area has been exceeded to date (refer to evidence documents for the draft Local Plan Reg 19: September 2023).

Melksham's first Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2021), does not include this site as a housing allocation; nor does it include it in its reviewed Plan which was made on 4th August 2025. The latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan has housing allocations for at least 483 dwellings across 5 sites. The emerging Local Plan has allocations for 845 dwellings across 3 sites. This gives a total allocation of 1,328 set against a residual figure in the Melksham area of 1,120 and 68 for Shaw and Whitley (as at 31 May 2023) as set out in the draft Local Plan.

At the 5th August 2025 Strategic Committee meeting there was discussion as to whether the Plan allocations (Local and Neighbourhood) were coming to fruition, and that is detailed below. The plan led approach is working, with applications coming forward for pretty much all of the sites in both plans, ahead of them being made, and therefore this speculative site is not required

¹ SHELAA <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1084/Monitoring-and-evidence>

to contribute to the 5-year housing land supply in this Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area. It is not the role of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan to fulfil the shortfall in the 5-year land supply for the whole of Wiltshire, and this was discussed and agreed at the Strategic Committee on the 5th August, following legal advice, with the decision as detailed above.

For the refreshed Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2, the Qualifying Bodies were given an indicative number to allocate by Wiltshire Council of 200 houses in Melksham and Bowerhill and 70 in Shaw and Whitley, a total of 270. The completed Neighbourhood Plan proposes a total of 453, enough to cover any potential increase of housing numbers required in the Local Plan when finalised.

- Policy 7.1 Cooper Tires a brownfield site for 100 dwellings, the site has been recently sold, and some light touch demolition work has commenced in August.
- Policy 7.2 Land at the former Melksham Library site, a brownfield site 50 dwellings for older people. This project is being progressed by Wiltshire Council as landowner and developer, with pre application meetings arranged with the qualifying bodies in September. The existing buildings were demolished some time ago.
- Policy 7.3 Land South of Western Way, Bowerhill for 210 houses and 70 bed care home. This site has outline permission following Appeal and has been bought by Barratt Homes who have carried out pre application meetings with the qualifying bodies and are understood to be submitting a Reserved Matters application imminently.
- Policy 7.4 Land at Whitley Farm, Whitley, this is for a heritage led development and as such has no housing number assigned, but in previous Regulation 14 versions of the Plan had a nominal 10 dwellings indicated.
- Policy 7.5 Land at Middle Farm, Whitley, this has an allocation for 50 dwellings, an increase on its original allocation of 18 dwelling in the first Neighbourhood Plan, and a current planning application for 22 dwellings awaiting decision.

Wiltshire Council's three Melksham sites in the Local Plan have already started their journey through the planning system, increasing in housing numbers as they do so.

- Policy 18 for Blackmore Farm has an approved outline application for 500 dwellings (425 dwellings in the policy which covers a larger site area).
- Policy 19 for land adjacent to Melksham Oak School has met with the parish council at pre application stage, and has conducted public consultation, with a planning application for some 200 houses imminent (135 dwellings in the policy)
- Policy 20 Land at the A3102/New Road Farm is a current planning application (full, not outline) and has been for some time, for 295 dwellings (285 dwellings in the policy).

As they stand today, they will bring 995 more houses to the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area. With the new Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 numbers, this gives a projected number of 1,448 extra houses by 2038 against the identified number in the Local Plan of 1,120. (NB: in the officer report for the Snarlton Farm application at the Strategic Committee on 5th August, a residual figure of 910 for Melksham is quoted but we are unsure as to how that was calculated.)

The parish council believe that these planned numbers are more than sufficient to meet the needs of the community and speculative developments need not, and should not, be considered at this time.

If this application is approved, it will mean that the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 4th August 2025) is completely undermined within a few weeks of its being voted through by the community at Referendum on 31st July.

Members had met with the developer at pre application stage on 30th June 2025 and had raised concerns on a number of topics (the notes were approved in Min 159/25biii). Members agreed that they wish to reiterate the following concerns regarding technical aspects of the application.

- The Parish Council have significant concerns about the safety of the A365 in this area. There are already road safety concerns relating to the safety of turning into/out of Melksham Oak Community School and Bowerhill Lane, speeding and inappropriate overtaking. There are number of new developments, including this one, that need to be considered as part of a holistic review of the safety measures needed for the road. There is a current LHFIG (Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group)² issue 9-24-27 being progressed to make the turning off the A365 into Bowerhill Lane safer following a road traffic accident earlier in the year with potential life changing injuries; vehicles are vulnerable to being rear-ended whilst waiting to turn right off the A365. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9qj983dn04o>

There is also a current LHFIG issue 09-23-12 being progressed with evidence from covert cameras earlier in the year demonstrating cars on the A365 overtaking cars waiting in the ghost lane to turn into Hornchurch Road; with a costed scheme drawn up. The report from the camera evidence is available from the parish council or the highways officer Martin Rose.

Members feel that similar schemes as would be required for the turning into this development and that the planned development should be considered as part of the proposed holistic review of the A365 Bath Road from the Bowerhill Roundabout to the east of Turnpike Garage (MIN514/24ai). The holistic review to take into account the Local Plan Policy 19 site, which accesses on to the A365 close to this

² <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/6632/Local-highway-and-footway-improvement-groups>

development, and an imminent planning application. In addition, there is a planning application PL/2024/11426 for a large warehouse for Gompels adjacent to this planning application, for consideration in the access off the A365 considerations, as well as the proposed A350 Melksham bypass having a roundabout the other side of the proposed Gompels warehouse site.

It is noted that there is an advisory for HGVs to not travel through Seend and that therefore directs HGV traffic along this stretch of the A365.

The parish council routinely erect their Speed Indicator Device (SID) on this stretch of the A365, in both directions and download the data to send to the police. Attached (attachment 1) is the original traffic survey for the SID eligibility and the summary of downloaded data (attachment 2) that shows speeds in this stretch of road reaching a staggering 112mph on one occasion, but consistent speeding over 30mph. The SID is set at the intervention level of 35mph as per Wiltshire Council's guidance, and does not record lower than that speed. The two sites are outside Melksham Oak Community School in both directions.

- Concerns were raised about the runoff of the surface water into the ditches on Bowerhill Lane, as these ditches are known to flood. Additional load could result in backflow and flooding in the Hastings Road area.
- Members had questioned whether the development impacts on the Grade II listed Old Loves Farm building. The developer had explained that the plan included open space to separate the heritage asset from the development. The Heritage assessment had concluded that the impact would be less than substantial (low).

Members felt that the impact on Grade II listed Old Loves Farm building would not be less than substantial and felt that the development would destroy the setting.

They felt that the development was contrary to Policy 21 (Local Heritage) of the made Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2.

Members felt that the comments made in application PL/2024/11426 Land to the south of A365 Bath Road and West of Turnpike Garage (Gompels Warehouse) should be applied to this application:

"The application proposals would result in less than substantial harm (at a high level) to the setting of the Grade II listed building Old Loves Farm, and the historic farmstead, contrary to the Core Policy 58 and section 16 of the NPPF. The less than substantial harm is considered to be at the upper end of the scale and is not outweighed by public benefits or the applicants asserted economic benefits."

- Questions were asked about the walking routes to primary schools. It was noted that Bowerhill Primary School would be the closest but that the shortest walking route arrived at the back of the school which cannot be accessed. As the proposed school at Pathfinder Place is currently on hold and the other primary schools are significantly further

away this may encourage parents to drive their children to school. It was also noted that there is a significant distance from the development to the nearest local amenities (shop, pub etc).

- The site was independently assessed by AECOM in 2023 for the review of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, and the extract of that report that covering SHELAA site 3345 Old Loves Farm is attached (attachment 3); with the following summary:

“The site is not suitable for allocation for residential development in isolation.

The site is greenfield southeast of Bowerhill, adjacent to its settlement boundary. It is served by existing bus stops and is within a reasonable distance from local education services. The site could be potentially accessed via Bowerhill Lane, however, comments from the Highways Authority on planning applications on adjacent sites note that Bowerhill Lane may be unsuitable to support further development. The site may be potentially suitable if developed in conjunction with Site 3331. The creation of acceptable vehicular access may require the removal of the existing mature hedgerows surrounding the site. Further consultation with the relevant Highways Authority would be required.

The site contributes to the rural transition of Bowerhill to the open countryside and has some intervisibility with the surrounding landscape and Public Rights of Way. Development of the site would lead to an urbanising effect which would need to be mitigated. It may be appropriate to develop the site alongside Site 3331 as a comprehensive extension to Bowerhill, however, this may adversely impact the settlement pattern and settlement edge of Bowerhill.

The site is located to the rear of the Grade II listed building, Old Love Farmhouse. It may contribute to the agricultural setting of the designated heritage assets. Further heritage assessment would be required.”

Whilst maintaining their objection to this application, if Wiltshire Council are minded to approve this application, then the parish council wish to see the following:

- Members would like to see 40% affordable housing as per the emerging Local Plan and not 30% as per the application.
- The parish council has a list of items it would like to see included in new developments, and this is also attached (attachment 4).

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Wiltshire Councillor Holder to comment.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder commented that he had requested that the application was called in to committee if it was recommended for approval. He also noted that it was likely to be heard by the Western Area Planning Committee with different members to the Strategic Committee which refused PL/2024/07097 Land south of Snarlton Farm and so the reasons for that refusal needed to be articulated in this submission.

The meeting reconvened.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder left the meeting at 7:13pm

- b) [PL/2025/05856](#) **Land North of Melksham Substation, Near Melksham, Wiltshire** Full Planning Permission: Planning Application 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). Applicant: Mr Tom O'Hare

Members were confused that the application title referred to Wick Solar Farm and Studley Solar Farm, but that the application focussed on the connection to Wick Solar Farm.

Post Meeting Note:

Members considered application PL/2021/08690 for Studley Solar Farm and made comments on the application on 12/04/22 and 12/10/21 (MIN 526/21 and MIN267/21).

Comments: NO OBJECTION but Melksham Without Parish Council make the following points and asks for them to be taken into consideration:

The council feels that the proposed working hours of 8am – 6pm Monday to Friday and 8am – 1pm on Saturday are too extensive and will cause disruption to residents of Westlands Lane. The residents of Westlands Lane are particularly sensitive to traffic issues due to the cumulative impact of multiple developments and projects, not just the current scheme.

This application requires a robust and enforceable construction traffic management plan that is closely monitored and enforced. Over the years the council have had experienced calls and issues related to traffic not adhering to any Construction Management Plan for access to the National Grid site and adjacent BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) sites. There needs to be signage at the junction of the A350 and Westlands Lane to state that no construction traffic may use that route. Access must be via Corsham Road and Westlands Lane to avoid the weight limited bridge. In the past, drivers have cited the “apart from access” sign as a means to use the route from the A350; they have also shown paperwork stating access via the A350, and/or their sat nav directing them via the A350. There needs to be signage as vehicles exit the proposed site to say “no right turn”. Deliveries when booked to go to site must inform the drivers to not access via the A350.

The adopted Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan 2 Policy 3 (Flood Risk and Natural Flood Management) requires that development proposals in locations with known flooding issues [such as Shaw and Whitley] should include appropriate mitigation and construction methods, and, where appropriate contributions towards wider catchment projects. It is suggested that the applicant should consider offering community benefit by clearing ditches.

Please be aware that the Existing Substation and site are on the direct migration route from the Bath and Bradford on Avon SAC to Drews Pond Wood LNR, Devizes – please refer to the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan Batscape Strategy, Page 33 and all the references to direct migration routes. The parish council believes that this should be considered.

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/549/Corsham-Batscape-Strategy/pdf/sppnp-corsham-batscape-strategy-reduced.pdf?m=637102851057030000>

There are known to be significant reports of great crested newts in that general area, with 60 recorded as part of the evidence surveys for Lime Down Solar <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010168> within 100 metres of the site.

The parish council request that any mature trees that have to be removed are replaced with mature trees and not saplings. Please refer to Policy 17 Trees and Hedgerows in the made Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2.

Highways/Construction Traffic:

It's noted that the construction period may coincide with other schemes close by, which could exacerbate highway issues.

- PL/2024/09725 Land off Corsham Road, Whitely, outline planning application for 22 dwellings with new access off Corsham Road. This is still under consideration, and is on the corner of Corsham Road and Westlands Lane.
- Please see links to the Notice and Indicative Plan for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) for Westlands Lane, Melksham Without commencing 4th February 2025 and ending 19th February 2026.

https://api-gb.one.network/downloads/tm/1142/8h-ttro-speed-restriction-westlands-lane_141127233_3822978_b5eb6c421d.pdf

https://api-gb.one.network/downloads/tm/1142/indicative-plan_141127233_3822990_fa6ce466a2.pdf

https://api-gb.one.network/downloads/tm/1142/indicative-plan_141127233_3833228_3159da0ffa.pdf

https://api-gb.one.network/downloads/tm/1142/notice-2-sl_80d04bbe1a.pdf

- a) **[PL/2025/05928](#) 6 Beeches Green, Shaw, Melksham, SN12 8JD**
Householder Application Children's tree house (free standing) Applicant:
Mr James David Milne-Smith

Comments: OBJECT

Members noted that the structure is large and elevated which raises concerns about the impact on the neighbouring properties. Specifically, the structure sits adjacent to the property of the neighbour at number 7, and the windows on the west of the structure overlook the neighbour at number 5 from an elevated height.

They also noted that the structure is not associated with a tree so shouldn't be designated as a "tree house".

- b) [PL/2025/06040](#) **Land at Lower Woodrow, Forest, Melksham** Circular 14/90 - Electricity Overhead Lines notification: Alterations to the low voltage (LV) overhead lines at Lower Woodrow. Applicant: Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks (SEN)

Comments: No objection

The adopted Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan 2 Policy 3 (Flood Risk and Natural Flood Management) requires that development proposals in locations with known flooding issues should include appropriate mitigation and construction methods, and, where appropriate contributions towards wider catchment projects.

Members noted that properties at Rhotteridge Farm Annex had been subject to internal property flooding twice in 2025 and therefore the applicant should consider offering community benefit by clearing ditches at the location. It was also noted that the farmer had been unable to complete this work himself due to the need for traffic management.

- c) [PL/2025/06078](#) **211 Woodrow Road, Melksham, SN12 7RD (Meadowbrook)** Full Planning Permission: Change of Use of the land from Agricultural to Charity / Community Use (Retrospective) Erection of a Keder Polytunnel and Yurt (Proposed) Applicant: Grace Dalglish

Comments: Support

It was noted that Melksham Without Parish Council had given a grant to the applicant, Meadowbrook CIC (Community Interest Company) earlier in 2025

- d) [PL/2025/05552](#) **Land South of Brockleaze, Neston, Corsham, SN13 9TE** Full Planning Permission: Battery Energy Storage System with associated infrastructure. Applicant: Greenergy Renewables UK Ltd.
Comments by: 28th August 2025

Members noted that this application was not in the parish but would be connecting into the National Grid sub-station at Beanacre.

Comments: Object

Members note and support the comments submitted by Corsham Town Council and CPRE (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England).

Members also support the conclusions of the CAWS (Community Action Whitley and Shaw) documents on Brockleaze BESS Compliance with NFCC Guidance and BESS Firewater and Firewater Runoff Containment Requirements.

Members noted that the cable route for connection National Grid substation at Beanacre is not defined but also noted that the connection date is stated as 2037. Members felt that the application is premature.

201/25 Amended Plans/Additional Information:

- a) [PL/2024/10345](#): **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

- i) Draft Heads of Terms for the S106 legal agreement

Members noted that comments had been submitted on the draft Heads of Terms for the S106 legal agreement following discussion and agreement at the Full Council meeting on 28th July 2025 (MIN187/25d).

The Clerk highlighted a number of points that had been raised by the council at the Strategic Planning Committee meeting on application PL/2024/07097: Land south of Snarlton Farm, which were also relevant to this application.

Comments: Members agreed that the following additional points should be submitted:

- The suggested contribution for a Community Hub should be reflective of the applicant not supplying land, but also at not supplying services to any community land. In the negotiations related to application PL/2023/11188 Land at Blackmore Farm this was reflected as c£11k for the land and £353k for the services (utilities etc). Melksham Without Parish Council is disappointed that Wiltshire Council have continued suggesting and negotiating this contribution without any input from the parish council at all.
- The pedestrian crossing and highway improvements should have triggers to be in place before occupation. Also, when contributions have been made to Wiltshire Council for works there should be some trigger for them to do the work and not delay it for many years later, as in the cases of the footpath to the rear of Melksham Oak school and the, still awaited, pedestrian access improvement into town from the Pathfinder application. These conditions/contributions are to make things safe and/or sustainable and they should be in place sooner.

- ii) NHS Contributions

The Clerk had circulated a summary of her research into the different request related to NHS contributions in recent major planning applications. She had also shared her summary with the NHS and had questioned the lack of consistency in requests particularly related to RUH (Royal United Hospital)..

Members agreed that this information should be submitted to the developers.

iii) Highways and Rights of Way improvements in draft S106

It was also noted that the parish council had made some alternative proposals about the use of the money allocated to Right of Way improvements and that Melksham Town Council (MTC) may identify some alternative proposals at their Economic Development meeting on Tuesday 12th August 2025.

iv) Bus Travel Plan

The draft Public Transport Strategy for Melksham and Suggestion for Town Bus "Route 16" to serve East of Melksham documents were discussed. Members requested that the bus services are extended to early morning and late evening.

Members agreed that this information should be submitted to the developers.

v) Comments from Urban Design

Comments: Members commend the thorough assessment performed by Urban Design. They support the views of Urban Design and support the requirement for the developer to response to Urban Design's comments.

- b) [PL/2025/02107](#) **Shaw House, Bath Road, Shaw, Melksham, SN12 8EE. Listed building consent (Alt/Ext):** Retention of works to attic floor, to include: replacement of floorboards, repairs to all existing historic doors, relocation of bathroom and kitchen, alterations to layout, and general refurbishment works, including upgrading of electrics, heating and plumbing. Roof repairs, including: replacement of roof tiles, chimney repair, replacement of bitumen flat roof, lead gutter repairs, installation of traditional wooden frame and lead-lined gutter to south elevation.
Applicant: Mr Craig Bond

Members noted the additional information provided on building works performed but had no comments to make.

202/25 Current planning applications: Standing item for issues/queries arising during period of applications awaiting decision.

- a) [PL/2024/07097](#): **Land south of Snarlton Farm, Snarlton Lane, Melksham, SN12 7QP:** Erection of up to 300 dwellings (Class C3); land for local community use or building (incorporating Classes E(b), E(g) and F2(b) and (c)); open space and dedicated play space and service infrastructure and associated works on and South of Snarlton Farm (Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for two pedestrian and vehicle accesses (excluding internal estates roads) from Eastern Way) - Resubmission of PL/2023/07107). Applicant: Catesby Estates Promotions Limited.

The outcome of the Strategic Planning Committee on 5th August 2025 was noted, with this planning application being refused. It is expected to go to

Appeal, with Wiltshire Council using this as a test case for a brand new Neighbourhood Plan with NPPF Paragraph 14 protection in place, set against a landscape of a lack of 3 year land supply held by Wiltshire Council.

- b) [PL/2024/11665](#) **Land at, Semington Road, Melksham, SN12 6DP** (Rear of Townsend Farm, Phase 2) Application for reserved matters pursuant to application ref: PL/2022/08155 for appearance, scale, layout and landscaping Applicant: Living Space Housing

Members had raised concerns about the access road and impact on tree and hedgerow. Correspondence from the developer confirming that the access road works would be as per the approved plan was noted.

- c) [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.

No new comments or documents to date.

- d) [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).

Comments: Members felt strongly that this application should be refused for the same reasons as for application PL/2024/07097 Land south of Snarlton Farm, which was refused at the Strategic Planning committee on 5th August 2025. Both applications are speculative and not in either the recently made Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan or the Emerging Wiltshire Council Local Plan

The development as proposed, would materially conflict with the Council's strategic core policies CP1, CP2 and CP15 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, as well as significantly and demonstrably conflicting with the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2, which allocates other land for housing (as made on 4 August 2025) and that the benefits of the development would not outweigh the aforesaid Plan conflicts and that the application is hereby refused in full compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 14.

Members discussed the correspondence from the developer regarding Heads of Terms for S106 and provided the following answers to their questions:

- Wiltshire Council have a standard calculation to determine the sum for the maintenance play provision that should be used.
- The parish council consider a contribution towards playing pitches necessary and refer the developers to Wiltshire Council's Playing Pitch Strategy adopted in December 2024
- Education provided the following feedback on questions from the Clerk:

At the present time we have sufficient school places in Melksham without the need for a new primary school. We will continue to monitor the number of surplus places against anticipated demand and would only look to bring forward a new primary school at the point when it is needed to meet demand. No decision has been made on whether this school will be located at

Pathfinder Place or Blackmore Farm, as that will depend on the timing, particularly around when the Blackmore Farm site will become available.

As it not yet been determined whether the Pathfinder site will be needed for a new primary school, no decision has been made on potential alternative uses. Any alternative use would need to comply with the conditions in the Section 106 agreement. There is still a need for new early years and SEND places in the locality so these could be options.

The new housing on Semington Road falls within the catchment area of Aloeric Primary School, to which the walking route has been deemed as safe by the Passenger Transport team. I have no expertise in that area and have always sought their professional advice on that matter which has been provided to you previously.

In September, when schools reopen, we anticipate that Aloeric Primary School will have 67 available places for anyone moving in, with places available in all year groups. This exceeds the number of pupils who are expected to move into the developments on Semington Road. It's likely that some will already be local children already attending local schools, or that some parents will express preferences for alternative schools. Bowerhill Primary also has 28 available places, to which there is also a safe walking route via Portal Road. In addition, there are surplus places at The Manor and Forest and Sandridge (although these will be over the statutory walking distance for under 8's). Parents are free to express a preference to any primary school. If they are unable to secure a place at a school within a safe walking distance, then they can apply for free transport through the Passenger transport team.

The walking route from Semington Road to Melksham Oak has also been assessed as safe by the Passenger Transport Team. Safe routes do not necessarily need to be the most direct route. I will however pass your question about the S106 funding for highways improvements to the Highways team to consider.

In terms of place planning, Melksham Oak currently has a high number of surplus places. These are "allocated" to developments as they apply for planning consent. Once all have been allocated, we would seek contributions for any additional places needed. When assessing developments we must take into account our latest school forecasts, formulated in accordance with the DfE's forecast methodology. If numbers at Melksham Oak did increase more than our forecasts currently suggest, then the Council could use Basic Need grant provided by the DfE for the provision of additional places.

- The parish council would like to see a Public art contribution included and understand that there is a standard calculation for this. The parish council wish to be involved in the public art scheme.
- As discussed earlier in the meeting, the Clerk had circulated a summary of her research into the different request related to NHS contributions in recent major planning applications. She had also shared her summary with the NHS and had questioned the lack of consistency in requests particularly related to RUH.

Comments: Members agreed that the following additional points should be submitted:

- The pedestrian crossing and highway improvements should have triggers to be in place before occupation. Also, where contributions have been made to Wiltshire Council for works there should be some trigger for them to do the work and not delay it for many years later, as in the cases of the footpath to the rear of Melksham Oak school and the, still awaited, pedestrian access improvement into town from the Pathfinder application. These conditions/contributions are to make things safe and/or sustainable and they should be in place sooner.
- As per the precedent set at the planning appeal for land west of Semington Road, if Wiltshire Council are approving this application to assist their lack of 5-year land supply then they should insist it's built out quickly and actually does contribute to the numbers. The reserved matters should be conditioned to be submitted within 2, rather than 3, years to ensure this happens in a timely manner.

Resolved: The Clerk to develop a standard list of requests from the Council to be included in S106 discussions.

- e) [PL/2024/11426](#): **Land to the South of A365 Bath Road and West of Turnpike Garage, Melksham, Wilts (Gompels):** Construction of warehouse with office space, parking and associated landscaping including site access.

The minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee on 1st July 2025 and the response received following bird management request were noted.

No response had been received following a request for Economic Development to provide a view on the application.

Resolved: The Clerk to reiterate the request for Economic Development to provide a view on the application to the Director of Planning and the relevant Cabinet member. Additionally, the Clerk to ask the Director of Planning, Nick Thomas to clarify the comment he made during the Strategic Committee meeting to answer the question on whether approving or refusing the development would be against the policies in the emerging local plan.

- f) [PL/2025/03513](#) Land North of Top Lane, Whitley, Melksham (E388633, N166527) Permission in principle: Permission in principle for up to 6 dwellings Applicant: Ms Patricia Eaton

Comments: Object

Members agreed to proactively send further comments strongly feeling that this application should be refused for the same reasons as for application PL/2024/07097 Land south of Snarlton Farm, which was refused at the Strategic Planning committee on 5th August 2025.

Decision reason for PL/2024/07097:

“The development as proposed, would materially conflict with the Council's strategic core policies CP1, CP2 and CP15 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, as well as significantly and demonstrably conflicting with the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2, which allocates other land for housing (as made on 4 August 2025) and that the benefits of the development would not outweigh the aforesaid Plan conflicts and that the application is hereby refused in full compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 14”

Wiltshire Council's current Core Strategy, and its emerging Local Plan do not include this site as a strategic allocation. The application is speculative and not in either the recently made Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan 2 or the emerging Wiltshire Council Local Plan of which the site was considered as it has been a SHELAA (Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment)^[1] site for some time. There is no allocation for Melksham in the adopted Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (adopted February 2020). The current Core Strategy sets out policies until 2026, and the housing allocation for the Melksham area has been exceeded to date (refer to evidence documents for the draft Local Plan Reg 19: September 2023).

Melksham's first Neighbourhood Plan (made July 2021), does not include this site as a housing allocation; nor does it include it in its reviewed Plan which was made on 4th August 2025. The latest version of the Neighbourhood Plan has housing allocations for at least 483 dwellings across 5 sites. The emerging Local Plan has allocations for 845 dwellings across 3 sites. This gives a total allocation of 1,328 set against a residual figure in the Melksham area of 1,120 and 68 for Shaw and Whitley (as at 31 May 2023) as set out in the draft Local Plan.

At the 5th August 2025 Strategic Committee meeting there was discussion as to whether the Plan allocations (Local and Neighbourhood) were coming to fruition, and that is detailed below. The plan led approach is working, with applications coming forward for pretty much all of the sites in both plans, ahead of them being made, and therefore this speculative site is not required to contribute to the 5-year housing land supply in this Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area. It is not the role of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan to fulfil the shortfall in the 5-year land supply for the whole of Wiltshire, and this was discussed and agreed at the Strategic Committee on the 5th August, following legal advice, with the decision as detailed above.

For the refreshed Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2, the Qualifying Bodies were given an indicative number to allocate by Wiltshire Council of 200 houses in Melksham and Bowerhill and 70 in Shaw and Whitley, a total of 270. The completed Neighbourhood Plan proposes a total of 453, enough to cover any

^[1] SHELAA <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1084/Monitoring-and-evidence>

potential increase of housing numbers required in the Local Plan when finalised.

- Policy 7.1 Cooper Tires a brownfield site for 100 dwellings, the site has been recently sold, and some light touch demolition work has commenced in August.
- Policy 7.2 Land at the former Melksham Library site, a brownfield site 50 dwellings for older people. This project is being progressed by Wiltshire Council as landowner and developer, with pre application meetings arranged with the qualifying bodies in September. The existing buildings were demolished some time ago.
- Policy 7.3 Land South of Western Way, Bowerhill for 210 houses and 70 bed care home. This site has outline permission following Appeal, and has been bought by Barratt Homes who have carried out pre application meetings with the qualifying bodies are understood to be submitting a Reserved Matters application imminently.
- Policy 7.4 Land at Whitley Farm, Whitley, this is for a heritage led development and as such has no housing number assigned, but in previous Regulation 14 versions of the Plan had a nominal 10 dwellings indicated.
- Policy 7.5 Land at Middle Farm, Whitley, this has an allocation for 50 dwellings, an increase on its original allocation of 18 dwelling in the first Neighbourhood Plan, and a current planning application for 22 dwellings awaiting decision.

Wiltshire Council's three Melksham sites in the Local Plan have already started their journey through the planning system, increasing in housing numbers as they do so.

- Policy 18 for Blackmore Farm has an approved outline application for 500 dwellings (425 dwellings in the policy which covers a larger site area).
- Policy 19 for land adjacent to Melksham Oak School has met with the parish council at pre application stage, and has conducted public consultation, with a planning application for some 200 houses imminent (135 dwellings in the policy)
- Policy 20 Land at the A3102/New Road Farm is a current planning application (full, not outline) and has been for some time, for 295 dwellings (285 dwellings in the policy).

As they stand today, they will bring 995 more houses to the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area. With the new Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 numbers, this gives a projected number of 1,448 extra houses by 2038 against the identified number in the Local Plan of 1,120. (NB: in the officer report for the Snarlton Farm application at the Strategic Committee on 5th August, a residual figure of 910 for Melksham is quoted but we are unsure as to how that was calculated.)

The parish council believe that these planned numbers are more than sufficient to meet the needs of the community and speculative developments need not, and should not, be considered at this time.

If this application is approved, it will mean that the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 4th August 2025) is completely undermined within a few weeks of its being voted through by the community at Referendum on 31st July.

- g) [PL/2025/04158](#) **Melksham Football And Rugby Club, Eastern Way, Melksham, SN12 7GU**. Full Planning Application: To enable the area of land known as Melksham Rugby and Football club, to hold a temporary music event only for the 20th and 21st June 2025 with associated temporary structures built for the event.

Members noted the documents and feedback provided, however felt no need to make further comment.

A member of the public left at 8:17pm

203/25 Premises Licences applications and decisions:

No new applications to discuss.

204/25 Proposed Energy Installations

- a) **Halfway House Farm, Beanacre proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)**

No responses received.

- b) **National Grid related to the substation upgrade**

The notes from meeting with National Grid (Tuesday 22nd July 2025) were agreed.

The Clerk commented that she had, pre-empting a response from National Grid, obtained a quote for the cost of purchasing and maintaining a Speed Indicator Device (SID). She also had connected Highways Engineer Martin Rose to explore the possibility of installing a SID on Westlands Lane.

It was agreed that Councillors Richarson, Glover, Franks, Hemmings and Baines would attend the visit to the National Grid site. Councillor Harris would substitute for anyone unable to attend.

- c) To note upcoming Regional Energy Strategic Plan policy guidance which will impact how local planning applications for hydrogen gas plants are assessed, to be published by 1st October 2025

Comments: Members agreed to object to the recent RIVAN Industries (Energy Parks) Limited Swindon Borough Council planning application S/25/0809 pending the publication and adoption of the regional government “Wiltshire National Energy Screening Project (NESP)” policy guidance, to be

published by National Energy System Operator (NESO) CEO, Dr Paul Golby, former CEO of E.ON and his team at NESO post 01st October 2025.

d) **Lime Down Solar**

The update on the planning application was noted.

Stop Lime Down is preparing a full account of Island Green Power's (IGP) consultations, drawing attention to the many deficiencies, and this will be sent to the Planning Inspectorate during September. One aspect of their report will be the views of key organisations and individuals, particularly their dissatisfaction with IGP's consultations, including the restriction of the 'targeted' consultation to just statutory consultees. Stop Lime Down have also requested that there should be a further period of consultation including members of the public.

Comment: Members agreed to share the CAWS feedback relating to the recent consultation with Stop Lime Down. Members also agreed to add the council's name to Stop Lime Down's report as a council dissatisfied with the consultation process.

205/25 Planning Enforcement:

The Clerk reported that Enforcement has visited Wick Solar Farm following complaints of extended periods of noise during fence construction. No further complaints are expected.

The Clerk also reported that Enforcement is planning a visit to the Lambing Shed.

She also explained that Enforcement has no evidence related to the Scaffold Company. The Evidence supplied by the parish council will be resubmitted.

206/25 Planning Policy:

a) **Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan:**

The outcome of the Referendum and the adoption of Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan 2 were noted. A total of 1,903 people voted YES, with 239 voting NO. The turnout was 10.79%. Wiltshire Council then went on to "make" the Plan on Monday 4th August 2025.

The number of votes per polling station were also noted.

b) The updates to the Wiltshire Local Plan examination were noted.

207/25 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (*Standing Item*)

- a) Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements
 - i. Land at Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common, Melksham, SN12 7QS [PL/2023/11188](#): Demolition of agricultural buildings and development of up to 500 dwellings, up to 5,000 square metres

of employment, land for a primary school, land for mixed use hub, open space. Applicant: Tor & Co for Gleasons

No updates

ii. Pathfinder Place:

The Land Registry document to transfer the play areas to the Parish Council was signed by the Parish Council on 11th August 2025.

An update on the primary school had been provided earlier in the meeting (MIN 202/25d)

No response had been received on the request for an update on the footpath from Western Way to Burnet Close.

It was noted that Highways have not yet adopted the roads as there was still outstanding works by Taylor Wimpey.

Following a recent article in the press regarding Taylor Wimpey and fire cladding issues, members clarified that there were no concerns related to the cladding at Pathfinder Place in the flats, but that concerns had been raised about the absence of fire walls in the roof space between the flats.

Resolved: to ask Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder to provide confirmation that the situation was resolved.

iii. Buckley Gardens, Semington Road (PL/2022/02749: 144 dwellings)

The developer (David Wilson Homes) have confirmed that they will be making a contribution to the parish council towards a footbridge to link Buckley Gardens with the adjacent development to the north, Bowood View, and the Berryfield Village Hall.

The Clerk explained that she has been in contact with a company who can provide a quotation for a bridge but that they need additional details including measurements in order to provide a quote.

Members noted that a site visit was being arranged with Highways to discuss the allocation of the S106 funding related to determining the safe walking routes.

It was agreed that Councillors Woods, Franks, Haffenden and Pafford would visit the site with the Clerk to make an assessment on the bridge and to meet with Highways.

iv. To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers

None

v. It was noted that the Clerk has contacted Wiltshire Council to question the accessibility of published S106 agreements as these are scans of the signed versions and therefore cannot be read by accessibility (text to speech) readers or searched electronically.

- b) Contact with developers:
- i. Land South of Western Way for 210 dwellings and 70 bed care home (PL/2022/08504) – reserved matters
No update

- ii. **Land at Bath Road (adjacent to Melksham Oak) - pre-application**
No update

- iii. **Land at Old Melksham Library Site**

Councillors have been invited to a meet with the developer (Wiltshire Council) as part of Melksham Town Council's Economic Development Meeting on 2nd September 2025.

A pre-meeting is also being arranged by the developers to speak with the Clerk of Melksham Without Parish Council, the CEO of Melksham Town Council and Wiltshire Councillor Westbrook. No other councillors, from either council, have been invited.

Members were concerned that if their only opportunity to meet the developers was at the MTC meeting they would not be able to fully participate in the discussion (due to MTC standing orders regarding public participation)

Resolved: the Clerk to discuss options with Melksham Town Councillor Rabey (as Mayor and Chair of the Economic Development Committee).

Meeting closed at 8.53pm

Chairman, 8th September 2025

**NOTES OF MEETING WITH NATIONAL GRID
ON TUESDAY 22nd JULY 2025 AT 10:30AM
RE: Works at Melksham Sub-station**

Present: Councillor Richard Wood (Chair of Planning)
Councillor Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning)
Councillor David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council)
Councillor Mark Harris (Planning Committee Member)
Councillor Peter Richardson (Planning Committee Member)
Councillor Tony Hemmings
Teresa Strange (Parish Clerk, Melksham Without)
Fiona Dey (Parish Officer, Melksham Without)
Dan Pike (CAWS – Community Action Whitley and Shaw)
Mark Fox (External Affairs, National Grid)
Tom Stevens (Community Relations Team, National Grid)

Mark and Tom presented on the role of the National Grid (NG) and gave an update on the project being undertaken at the Melksham sub-station (slides attached). They stressed the importance of having a resilient network capable of delivering power when needed.

They explained that the ongoing Melksham expansion project is to install a new supergrid transformer. Councillors questioned how the project would benefit the local community. It was explained that as well as increased resilience to the power network, there was a community grants scheme available (which was discussed later in the meeting).

Mark and Tom invited Melksham Without Parish (MWPC) councillors to visit the site. [Post meeting it was confirmed that the visit would be limited to 5 individuals due to logistical constraints. MWPC to confirm attendees. NG to propose dates/times]

Mark and Tom shared that phase 2 of the Bramley to Melksham upgrade project had been announced the previous day. The work involves upgrading the overhead lines to increase capacity and is expected to start in early 2026. It was noted that Balfour Betty, who will be undertaking the work, and would be making planning applications for removal and replacement of hedgerows to enable access to the overhead lines.

Councillor Richardson asked whether there is an increase in flood risk due to the upgrades (as had been seen in Bishops Canning). Mark confirmed that he would confirm with the engineering team that flood risk had been fully considered and mitigated.

Another project to install a new shunt reactor was noted. It was explained that the reactor has arrived on site and installation is expected to be complete by the end of August. There is a separate shunt reactor (not a National Grid project) planned for an area adjacent to the Melksham sub-station.

Mark and Tom thanked the parish council for their communications about traffic infringements and explained the efforts they were making to minimise these. They stressed that issues were being taken seriously and had so far resulted in one driver no longer being permitted to come to the site. They were also passing on issues related to other works to the relevant companies.

Councillors explained that the residents of Westlands Lane were particularly sensitive to traffic issues due to the cumulative impact of multiple developments and projects, not just National Grid. Councillor Hemmings gave credit to National Grid's traffic management efforts in improving the situation on Westlands Lane.

Councillor Richardson noted that the 20mph speed limit outside the site was not being adhered to. Mark noted that it was outside their remit to be able to address this. The Clerk suggested that National Grid could buy a Speed Indicator Device (SID) for about £3000-£4000 (plus the cost of replacing the batteries every couple of weeks) which could be located outside the site and then passed on to Parish Council. NG committed to consider the suggestion and to provide a response.

Mark and Tom presented on their Community Grant Programme for communities affected by National Grid projects. They suggested the project on the Bramley to Melksham upgrades could be used to access the grants as the project was for a new overhead line.

Mark also explained that he would be the contact for Community Benefit Days which are available for voluntary work. The Clerk suggested that, if National Grid had diggers on site for their project work, they could be helped with digging out ditches in Whitley as a flood prevention measure. NG to consider the suggestion.

Councillor Pafford noted that the National Grid sub-station in Melksham was getting a large number of cable connection requests and asked whether connections elsewhere would be a possibility. Mark explained that the strategy for connections was within the remit of the National Energy Systems Operator (NESO), however he was not aware of any plans for a new sub-station. He suggested that at a future meeting he would ask someone with more knowledge of cabling and connection plans to attend to provide the wider perspective.

Councillor Richardson asked whether NG could provide a list of start and estimated end dates for current and planned projects. NG to respond.

Meeting closed at 11:45am