

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish
Council held on Monday 22nd September 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 Doel, Mark Harris, David Pafford, Peter Richardson and Martin Franks.

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

In attendance: Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford

Melksham Town Councillor Saffi Rabey

On Zoom: There were no members of the public joining remotely via Zoom.

235/25 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.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Doel to the committee, which he has joined in his role as Acting Vice-Chair of the Council.

- a. Members noted that Barratt Homes have submitted a Reserved Matters application for Land South of Western Way (Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan policy 7.3) – outline planning application PL/2022/08504. 210 dwellings
- b. Members noted that Wiltshire Council have begun ground investigation works on Melksham's former golf course at Bowerhill on 15th September 2025, as part of pre application work. Details were in the agenda pack from a Wiltshire Council press release.
- c. National Grid had offered three dates for a visit to their site. Members opted for a visit on the morning of the 8th October 2025.

Resolved: Parish Officer to communicate date (8th October) and time (morning) preference to National Grid and to collate and pass on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) sizing information required for the visit.

236/25 Apologies:

There were no apologies as all members of the committee were present.
Apologies were received from Wiltshire Councillor Holder.

237/25 Declarations of Interest:

- a. Declarations of Interest
None

b. Dispensation Requests for this Meeting:

None requested.

238/25 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature:

Resolved: Agenda item 13a (Planning Enforcement) and item 14biii (Bowood View) to be held in closed session 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 the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Agenda item 13a: Start of legal action.

Agenda item 14biii: Contractual discussions.

239/25 Public Participation:

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Public Participation

Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford, Melksham Without North & Shurnhold

Wiltshire Councillor Alford commented that application PL/2025/07044 – Former Countrywide Site for a new Aldi store is within his division. He was not planning to call in the application, as it is a brownfield site. However, he had spoken to the Planning Officer as he felt that the applicant's flood report downplayed the flooding problems at the site and urged the Officer to look closely at the issue.

The meeting reconvened.

240/25 Planning Applications: The Council considered the following applications and made the following comments:

- a. [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

Comments:

Member noted that this site is allocated in the Wiltshire Local Plan – Policy 19.

No objection subject to the following comments being addressed

Access

Members are concerned that there is only a single point of access onto the development (from the A365). Whilst the NPPF does not explicitly require a second emergency access for all large developments, it does mandate that all developments must have safe and suitable access for all users, including emergencies. The parish council are looking for confirmation that a second emergency only access is needed or not, as other developments of a similar size have recently had to include them, namely PL/2024/10345 Land north of

the A3102, Melksham (New Road Farm) for 295 dwellings, PL/2025/07391 Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wiltshire for 210 dwellings, and 17/12514/REM Land East of Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6DR for 150 dwellings.

A365 Bath Road

Members note that the application include the changes proposed to the A365 Bath Road including a toucan crossing, a ghost lane and relocation of the 30mph speed limit sign. However, the Parish Council continue to 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) 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 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 PL/2025/06105 (Land at Bowerhill Lane, Bowerhill, Melksham for 50 dwellings) and PL/2024/11426 for a large warehouse for Gompels, which both access on to the A365 close to this development. In addition 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.

In addition, the Wiltshire Police & Crime Commissioner recently published figures on the work of the Community Speed Enforcement Officers (CSEOs) and Road Safety Officers who undertake sessions to identify speeding

motorists and to issue tickets. The data show that five sessions have been undertaken on the A365 in Bowerhill in 2025 (1st January to 2nd September) resulting in 81 drivers being sent on a Speed Awareness Course and 3 drivers being issued a fine and points for speeding.

Number of Dwellings

Members noted that the number of dwellings in this application (205) is higher than the number allocated in Local Plan Policy 19 (135) but lower than the number of 240 suggested in the AECOM site assessment (site 3692) to inform the site allocation work in the recently made Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2. Members have no objections to the number of dwellings proposed as this allows full development of the site, with an acceptable housing density of 37 per hectare, and contributes to the housing numbers for the Melksham Area.

Pedestrian access into the school

Members remain concerned that children from the development would need to cross the A365 twice to access Melksham Oak Community School, as there is no space for a footpath on the north side of the road. It is noted that the developer has included “potential” pedestrian access to the school. The councillors felt strongly that access must be included.

Affordable Housing

Members noted that the application includes 30% affordable housing, however in pre-application discussion (on 6th May 2025) the developer confirmed that 40% of dwellings would be Affordable Housing in line with the emerging Local Plan. As this is a site allocated in the emerging Local Plan, Melksham Without Parish Council would like to see the affordable housing allocation to be 40% in line with this plan.

Land Reserved for the Expansion of Melksham Oak Community School

In pre-application discussion (on 6th May 2025) the developer had explained that the S106 agreement might define that the land reserved for the school expansion would be retained for education use for 10 years and possibly then revert to the developers. Given the current lack of demand for places at Melksham Oak Community School members want to see a period of retention longer than 10 years. It is also noted that the Draft Heads of Terms does not currently include a retention period

In addition, members would like to see a maintenance plan for the expansion land to ensure that it will be properly maintained and can be used by the residents. One suggestion was that it could be turned into a wild flower meadow.

Planning Obligations Draft Heads of Terms

Members felt that the Draft Heads of Terms were very basic and lacked detail. Melksham Without Parish Council will review these in detail and provide further comments separately.

Design and Access Statement

The Design and Access Statement incorrectly states that the site is in the parish of Melksham, whereas it is actually in Melksham Without. (para 2.1.1). It also states that the National Cycleway 403 runs to the south through Bowerhill, whereas it is actually through the village of Berryfield on Semington Road (para 2.12.6).

Whilst it is true that there is a Melksham Community Hospital (listed as part of local facilities), it is misleading to think that there are any treatment or minor injuries services there – it only provides a limited number of clinics, a hub for community nurses, wheelchair repair etc (Para 2.13). Para 2.14 details Character Analysis; it is very disappointing that no reference is made here, or throughout the document to either the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP V1 made in July 2021 and NHP V2 made in August 2025), or the Melksham Design Guide; particularly as Hannick were well aware of the NHP consultations and contributed to them. There is no explanation as to why Canon Square and Church Walk are being quoted as local vernacular whilst both NHP versions had character areas in detailed. Policy 6 of the latest NHP details type and tenure related to the Melksham Housing Needs Assessment and should be adhered to (para 4.9)

Para 5.6.3 The parish council request that they have first refusal to adopt the equipped play areas, but will not want to take on timber play equipment as they have experienced maintenance issues with this in the past; does timber play equipment fit with the Wiltshire Council specification?

Planning Statement

Para 3.8 talks to properties ranging from 2 to 5 bedrooms. Clause 3d of Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 Policy 6 Housing at Defined Statements states that “at Melksham and Bowerhill, prioritising the delivery of a balanced mix of two, three, and four bedroom dwellings, which should include bungalows” this is actually quoted at para 5.54 but does not seem to match the description at Para 3.8. We note Para 6.13 which says that this will be done at Reserved Matters stage.

- b. [PL/2025/07044](#) **Former Countrywide Site, Bradford Road, Melksham.**
Full planning permission Proposal: The construction of a new discount foodstore, car parking, access and landscaping on land at Bradford Road, Melksham. Applicant Name: Aldi

Comments: As this application is not in Melksham Without Parish, members felt that they could not support or object to the application. However, they made the following comments:

- Members are pleased to see a brownfield site being utilised, with Policy 10 of the made Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 for Employment Sites supporting the use of previously developed land.
- Members welcome the move of the access junction away from Farmers roundabout.
- Members are concerned about flooding of the road outside the site (B3107 Bradford Road) which can be closed for days at a time, and on-site flooding. Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 Policy 3 Flood Risk and Natural Flood Management applies, including the bit regarding contributions to wider catchment projects. The South Brook catchment area has been identified as a priority flood risk area by both the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council for its surface water flooding.

Melksham Town Councillor Rabey left the meeting at 7.50pm

- c. [PL/2025/06812](#) **SLADES FARM, TOP LANE, WHITLEY, MELKSHAM, SN12 8RA** Householder Application: Proposal: New Access Gates.
Applicant Name: Mr Martin Smith

Comments: No objection

- d. [PL/2025/07139](#) **293 SANDRIDGE COMMON, MELKSHAM, SN12 7QS**
Householder planning application: Proposed Two & Single Storey Side extension. Applicant Name: Paul Smith

Comments: No objection subject to reinstatement of the footpath to the front door of the neighbouring property (292 Sandridge Common) – refer to Neighbour comment on application PL/2025/03991.

Wiltshire Councillor Alford left the meeting at 7.53pm

241/25 Amended Plans/Additional Information:

Amended plans for Land South of Brockleaze (PL/2025/05552) were discussed as agenda item 10a.

242/25 Current planning applications: Standing item for issues/queries arising during period of applications awaiting decision.

- 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

Comments: Members considered the latest Highway Officer comments that were uploaded earlier in the day (22nd September 2025). For ease of reference, the comments from members have been recorded in red alongside the Highway Officer comments (see Appendix 1).

The Clerk provided feedback from the Planning Officer about the proposed contribution for the community centre had been calculated (total expected cost divided by the number of houses in the Local Plan).

It was noted that the Council are waiting for responses from Melksham Town Council to questions on whether: i) they support the bus strategy, ii) have any comments on the improvements to the highways in town (proposed removal of the double mini-roundabout on Sandridge Road), and iii) have any suggestions for Rights of Way improvements in place of MELK103 (which residents have requested be extinguished)

- 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

No new comments or documents to date.

- 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.

Comments: Members resolved to request that this application is now called in to committee.

They do this reluctantly, as the site is an allocation in the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) 2, but there has still been no movement that the parish council are aware of, from the applicant to recognise the larger site allocation in NHP2. The applicant was made aware at the beginning of September that the Parish Council was changing their stance to OBJECT to this application, and the applicant replied to say they would look at it, but there has been no further communication. This application would effectively block the development of the wider site, and therefore directly conflicts with Policy 7.5 of NHP2.

- 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).

No new comments or documents to date.

The developer is chasing a response from the NHS via the parish council

- 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.

Members noted the responses received following questions to the Director of Planning. Members were still unhappy with the responses and ideally would like to understand why their interpretation of Core Policy 34 differs to that of Wiltshire Council Planning.

- 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

No new comments or documents to date

- g. [PL/2025/03212](#) **Roundponds Farm, Shurnhold, Melksham, SN12 8DF** Full Planning Permission: The removal of existing gas fuelled generators (retrospective) and proposed installation of battery energy storage system (BESS) and associated equipment. Applicant: HC ESS3 LIMITED.

Comments: Members considered the updated Risk Management Plan and concluded that their previously submitted comments and position stand. They also noted that on the Brockleaze BESS application (PL/2025/05552) they have changed from the use the hydrants to water tanks.

- h. [PL/2025/06519](#) Summerleaze Lodge, 10 Beanacre, Melksham, SN12 7PT. Full Planning Permission: Change of use to the site from agricultural to domestic. To then develop the site with a bungalow, garage, gardens and drive. Applicant: Mr & Ms P Neale

The correspondence received from neighbours and Conservation comments were noted, but as members had considered this application at the Planning Committee meeting on 1st September 2025, the council's comments could not be changed and they did not wish to make any additional comments at this stage.

Resolved: To highlight the application to Drainage for their consideration.

243/25 Premises Licences applications and decisions:

- a. **WTF Presents Bingo Lingo – Halloween:** Saturday 1st November 2025 at Unit 47, Bath Road, Melksham (former Avon Tires Site).

Comments: No Objection. Members reviewed the documentation provided by the organisers (confidential at this time) and felt that it was thorough. Members noted that the location of the planned event is not within the parish.

244/25 Proposed Energy Installations

- a. **Land South of Brockleaze (PL/2025/05552)**

Comments: Members support the comments submitted by Community Action Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) on the amended plans – draft version circulated prior to the meeting (see Appendix 2)

- b. **Corsham Road, Whitley and Shaw**

Members were made aware that Scottish and Southern Electricity with their contractor Excalon Aureos had started installing pipework (ducts) on Corsham Road on 15th September 2025. However, the parish council had received no prior notification and no Temporary Traffic Order. Councillor Richardson explained that, as a resident, he had received a letter from the developer after the work had started. He has responded to the developer with a number questions about the purpose and scope of the work.

245/25 Planning Policy:

- a. **Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan:**

No response had been received on whether Melksham Town Council support the Delivery Framework Proposal from Place Studios.

Members expressed frustration that a number of organisations are in contact with the new owners of the Cooper Tires Site (Policy 7.1 in the adopted Joint

Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2) but no contact appears to have been established by Melksham Town Council. Members are concerned that opportunities that arise from early engagement with the developer may have been lost.

- b. There have been no updates to the Wiltshire Local Plan examination since the last meeting.
- c. The Guardian article on overturning decision at appeal was noted. Members also noted that Angela Raynor, who was driving the potential changes to planning policy, is no longer Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and therefore the policy changes may not be progressed.

246/25 Melksham Link Planning Application

Councillor Harris explained that he had attended a Wilts & Berks Canal Trust (WBCT) meeting. The Melksham Link project was having problems establishing funding and progressing the planning application due to the continued issues being raised by the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council Ecology.

247/25 Planning Enforcement:

- a. The update regarding Berryfield Lane was noted. It was also noted that Wiltshire Council Environmental Enforcement Officers, working with Wiltshire Police, had recently carried out a series of coordinated operations across the county to tackle fly-tipping, unlicensed waste carriers, and illegal scrap metal dealing.

Resolved: The Clerk to ask Wiltshire Council why the issue in Berryfield Lane had not been addressed in the recent campaign and why action was being left to the Environment Agency.

- b. Correspondence from Balfour Betty regarding Westlands Lane was noted and has been resolved.
- c. The response from Melksham Town Council regarding the Reggae Event at KGV (King George V Park) was noted

248/25 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)

- a. Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements
 - i. Pathfinder Place:

It was noted that the play area would be legally transferred to Melksham Without the following day (Tuesday 23rd September 2025).

It was also noted that the timing of works on the footpath from Western Way to Burnet Close had been announced in the Melksham Independent News, with work planned to start in spring 2026. Members expressed frustration that Wiltshire Council had not communicated to them directly, despite emails from the Clerk requesting updates.

No updates were available on the Public Open Space, highway adoption or the cladding/ fire wall issues.

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

It was noted that the Clerk has chased Wiltshire Council regarding the Public Art s106 contribution.

iii. **Bowood View**

The correspondence regarding Bowood View Management company and highways adoption was noted.

It was also noted Melksham Area Board had a priority/outcome to improve the service that householders receive from their management group and to explore whether a local housing management group can be established. This priority/outcome is being led by Wiltshire Councillors Alford and Holder. It was suggested that the Wiltshire Councillors speak with Keith Phillips as the Director of the Bowood View Management Company.

Resolved: The Clerk to ask National Association of Local Councils (NALC) to lobby central government on the issues related to management companies.

iv. **To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers**

None

b. Contact with developers:

i. **Land at Old Melksham Library Site**

It was noted that a pre-app meeting with the developers is planned for Tuesday 23rd September. Although the site is not in the parish, the meeting will be attended by the Clerk and Councillors Wood and Baines, as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee.

Meeting closed at 8.54pm

Chairman, 20th October 2025

Appendix 1:

Melksham Without Parish Council Comments on the Highway Comments for 24/1035 Land north of A3102 (New Road Farm) as approved at Melksham Without Parish Council Planning Committee Monday 22nd September 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Development Management

From: Highways Development Management

Ref: PL/2024/10345

Date: 19th September 2025

24/10345 Full, detailed planning application for 295 dwellings, play space, allotments, land for nursery, pedestrian and emergency access points, new 4th access arm from existing but improved A3102 / Eastern Way roundabout. Near New Farm, Melksham.

Introduction

The development site is adjacent to the existing built-up area of Melksham town, and has a frontage to the A3102 class I road Sandridge Common. Half way along the frontage there is the existing A3102 / Eastern Way roundabout from which vehicular access is proposed. The minor road New Farm Road runs along the eastern site boundary. No access is currently proposed from New Farm Road.

The land is a proposed site for residential development in the Wiltshire Local Plan Review Reg 19 which indicates the land as being potentially suitable for 285 dwellings and a 100 place nursery. The land is not allocated for development in the current Local Plan (the WCS).

Melksham is a market town in the settlement hierarchy. Market towns are considered suitable for further residential and employment development.

Highway comments were provided dated 8th January 2025 to the initial submission. Please refer to those highway comments for highway comments on policy background, and for initial comments on transport sustainability. Further comments on transport sustainability are provided below.

Transport sustainability

Distances to local facilities and walking and cycling times are provided in a Table at Section 3.20 of the TA. The town centre distance is further than stated being some 2160 metres from the centre of the development. The Oak School, now that a new connecting path has been opened recently, is closer than stated at about 2420 metres. The train station which provides a reasonably useful service is some 2650 metres away (measured by me).

Guideline walking distances usually referred to by the HA as recommended "considered" distances are to a town centre 800m, to schools 2000m, and to bus stops 400m. While the above measured distances and stated distances in the TA table are greater than these guideline distances, I note the likely allocation of the site in the forthcoming Local Plan, the recent Blackmore Farm permission, and the fact that some other residential areas of the town have greater walking distances. I would not wish to justify an objection on transport sustainability grounds providing contributions can be achieved to significantly

improve accessibility including necessary improved public transport connections.

Access roundabout

The existing roundabout has now been revised in layout to more suitably accommodate the new 4th access arm into the development. The roundabout appears generally suitable and within correct design parameters. **The parish council welcomes this revision to the roundabout.**

Further while this is a Full application it must be noted that the roundabout redesign has not been technically approved. Under the full technical approval process at S278 stage some further minor adjustments to the roundabout design may be required.

Site frontage improvements including formal crossings

The Planning Layout and the Highway Response Note details a satisfactory position of layout on the site frontage.

New Road

New Road is the existing minor lane which runs along the eastern boundary of the site. The carriageway varies but is generally about 4.2 metres. While there is some degree of rat-running along the route, there are narrow sections where cars have to give way to opposing vehicles, and at this point I would not support any development led traffic calming of the route. Vehicles are already often impeded while passing along the route and introducing traffic calming is unlikely to change driver rat running behaviour. **Whilst this is an “existing minor lane” the parish council note that it is used by many residents to access Chippenham and the M4 and is a major rat run route, that then takes traffic onwards to the single track, medieval bridges in Lacock that are often impassable in heavy rain. The parish council engaged with Bloor at early pre application stages and have been asking for engagement with the Highways department to propose a solution for the single track New Road, with no engagement from WC highways to date. Whilst not supporting traffic calming on this road, are Highways now in a position to offer advice on what would work here? The local highways engineers have raised concerns regarding the condition of the verges caused by cars passing using the verge rather than the passing places.**

Public Rights of Way

No public rights of way cross the site. Footpath MELK103 provides a possible connecting route from the site's south-western corner but is unsurfaced, overgrown and almost impassable. There is an alternative route running parallel only a short distance away. £30,000 should be provided to either facilitate surfacing and other improvements to MELK103, or possibly to finance its extinguishment. **The parish council have raised this in their comments, they do not feel that money should be spent on surfacing a RoW that residents have asked to be extinguished, they have asked Melksham Town Council for their view and understand that they do not wish for it to be resurfaced either. The parish council DO NOT think that the s106 funding should be spent on extinguishing an existing RoW, that does not promote better connectivity and Active Travel.**

The parish council suggest the following RoW improvements as alternatives.

1. Improvement to MELK46 & MELW60 from Savernake Avenue to New Road, as this currently goes through a garden at Kites Stile at New Road; a small diversion might be appropriate here.

2. General upgrade to stiles/kissing gates in the vicinity.

Bus services

Bus services are detailed at sections 3.22 to 3.24 of the TA. The Public Transport Team request £75,000 pa over 5 years to fund the town bus to serve into the development and also to ensure an hourly service as per the nearby Blackmore Farm permission.

Jonathon Dodd at Bloor has commented that the parish council should have a bus strategy for East of Melksham to inform this and this is something that has been produced and endorsed and submitted as part of the parish council's comments on the planning application.

Train services

Train services are detailed at section 3.25 of the TA. The development should contribute to Melksham train station access improvements proportionate with the nearby Snarlton Farm residential permission ref 07097.£5128 /300 x 295 = £5042 will be required

We note that the Snarlton Farm application has been refused at Strategic Committee.

Rail accessibility improvements at Melksham Railway station are detailed in policy 11 of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 (page 80) that was made on 4th August 2025. The parish council do not feel that £5k is enough of a contribution. What is the origin/reasoning of this calculation?

Further enhancements are planned/desirable summarised as:

- Reconfiguration of carriageway/footpath in order to add a bus stop, and rerouting of local and regional bus services through the station;
- Shared use pathway, pedestrian and cycle route to Foundry Close, providing convenient access to the east of Melksham via Scotland Road and Murray Walk;
- Stepped station access from Bath Road providing more convenient access to the west of Melksham, especially the Roundponds and George Ward Gardens areas.

The Melksham Transport User Group and other related organisations have put forward proposals for improvements to bus services in the Plan area. Key to these are:

- Routing services through the station forecourt
- Later evening services on all routes, but particularly the Chippenham/Trowbridge service which can provide a backup service if trains are disrupted
- More efficient scheduling of the town internal services. A trial of electric bus services for this purpose was held in 2022, and well received.

Road safety

During the 5 year study period no personal injury road traffic accidents have been detailed on the site frontage including at the existing access roundabout.

Development vehicular traffic and capacity assessments

The TA has been prepared in accordance with a detailed scope which was submitted to the HA prior to submission of this application. On a robust basis the development will generate about 155 trips in both the AM and PM peak hour periods, where a trip is a one-way vehicular movement. This equates to about one vehicle entering or leaving the access in the peak hours about every 23 seconds.

Relevant junctions have been capacity assessed, and problematic junctions are discussed below. (If not discussed below, reference to section 7 of the TA

will show that the assessed junction will operate without significant capacity detriment.)

Church Lane / Blackmore Road double mini roundabout

In the growth year of 2029 taking other committed developments into account the development will cause the junction to operate slightly over capacity. In the AM peak hour Church Lane north will have an RFC of 0.84 (where RFC exceed 0.85 there is identifiable capacity detriment) and a queue of around 4 vehicles. Sandridge Common East will have an RFC of 1.00 and a queue of 17 vehicles, or a delay of around 77 seconds. The TA suggests that the junction could become a staggered priority give way junction to address this. I am opposed to this solution, which will unduly prioritise the main road flow encouraging car use as opposed to encouraging active travel modes. Mitigation can be more sensibly achieved in line with guidance, policy and active travel considerations by a robust Travel Plan, and contributions to achieve a high standard of public transport.

The parish council have chased the town council several times on their view on this proposition as it's in the town and not the parish. As they have not received a response to date, Melksham Without Parish Council have therefore considered themselves and do NOT support a staggered junction arrangement here, they feel that the existing roundabout system works well.

Travel Plan

The application includes a generally satisfactory Full Residential Travel Plan except that the proposed green travel voucher at £100 per dwelling is too low and not within usual parameters for Wiltshire. £300 per property to be offered to each property will be required.

Details of site layout – need for revised plans

The application seeks full planning permission and I have examined the details of the layout with that in mind. Before I am able to provide a final response recommending approval revised plans must be submitted to address the following points of highway concern:-

1. There are areas of public open space, swales etc along the New Road frontage. As the residents will have free access to this area it is inevitable that access will be forced through the hedgerow to provide a leisure route to New Road. To avoid this a 3m metre wide connection should be provided at some point on the New Road frontage. There is a 2 metre verge along most of the frontage so visibility for such a pedestrian access can be achieved without loss of hedgerow other than at the access point.

Melksham Without Parish Council think that this should connect to the existing MELK46 & MELW60 from Savernake Avenue to New Road, and then the improvement that they are asking for, detailed in the RoW section above.

2. A 2 metre footway must be detailed from the end of the road near plot 278 to connect to the proposed crossing.

3. The various Surface Finish plans indicate a number of raised tables. These will not be accepted. The drawing should be noted that the indicated raised tables will in fact simply be changes in surface.

4. The Planning Layout and some other plans indicate a 2 metre wide “potential pedestrian connection” to the western boundary (Gladstone Road). While this would be useful and welcome **if** it can achieve the required connection on the other side of the development boundary, I am doubtful that a connection can be achieved as there is a gap between the adopted highway and the site boundary on the western side. This point is acknowledged in the Paul Basham Highway Response Note. If evidence cannot be provided that the through link can be achieved, the link route on the development side should be deleted – as a path that simply ends at the hedgerow would be unsatisfactory.

Connectivity is detailed in the NPPF. Chapter 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities Paragraph 96a Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social interaction including opportunities for meeting between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, **street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods**, and active street frontages.

Such connectivity should be encouraged, and Wiltshire Council should be working proactively to ensure that this happens rather than just accepting its difficult. Bloor are happy to facilitate but it needs someone to co-ordinate with the other land owners. Can the parties involved put some effort into this please? this is part of Wiltshire Council’s Strategic Plan – these sort of things should be able to be achieved – this is plan-led development! The adjacent development has a connection to the Savernake existing residential area (and access to fish and chip shop, community building, laundrette, pub etc) as requested by the parish council and insisted on by Wiltshire Council when it was developed, and would provide onward connectivity and active travel options for residents.

5. The Land Ownership Plan and the S38 Boundary Plan must detail the emergency access and the connecting route (above) to be detailed between the development and the eastern crossing as being adoptable highway.

6. The local town bus must circulate through the development. The main access road through the site is 6.2 metres – which is OK for this bus service. However the layout must enable the bus to circulate and leave without reversing, and the loop road is only 5.5 metres which is insufficient. This must be addressed – perhaps by a small 6.2m wide loop road arrangement towards the northern boundary? Can be discussed.

7. At least 2 bus stops with high access kerbs must be indicated at suitable locations within the development (see point 6 above)

The parish council is currently investing £75,000 on implementing Real Time Information in bus shelters/stops in the parish and request that this is included with bus shelters and stops within the development and vicinity, more details can be provided in conjunction with the Wiltshire Council Passenger Transport Team (Refer to Rebecca Lockwood-Norris and Tania McCarthy.).

Bus shelters should protect users from the weather with adequate sides, and have a decent seat, not just a perch. Dark green as per the parish council standard in the parish, and not bright green or other colours as recently installed.

8. The visibility splay plans indicate a number of forward visibility splays through bends that cross private domestic curtilages. These will not be accepted as we (the HA) insist that any required highway splay is fully adopted as highway. I suggest a quick meeting to discuss each splay as some may not be required, and where they are required the footway etc must be made to follow the back of the splay line.

Conclusion

I have no highway objection to this development subject to receipt of revised plans to address points 1 -7 above. Following receipt of satisfactory revised plans I will provide a final response detailing S106 obligations and conditions. To assist, those obligations and conditions will be on the following lines:-

Obligations

Public transport to assist with town bus to serve the development, and to ensure good standard of the local bus services £75,000 pa over 5 years = £375,000

Works in connection with footpath MELK103 £30,000.

Travel Plan £300 green travel voucher per dwelling

£7000 Travel Plan monitoring

Improving accessibility at train station £5042

Adding development details to local cycle maps £1000

The roads on the estate to be offered for highway adoption

Access roundabout alterations and the access.

Footway alterations near the access roundabout

Adoption of the main spine road through the estate to the northern site boundary.

Conditions

Implementation of the submitted Travel Plan

CMP

Provision of the emergency access with its visibility

Provision of the toucan crossing to the west and its visibility splays (see plan in the Highway Response Note)

Provision of the puffin crossing to the east and its visibility splays (see plan in the Highway Response Note)

Draft informatives

The applicant should be informed that while the permission gives detailed permission for the access arrangements, the more detailed Section 278 technical approval process may require some minor adjustments to the roundabout layout and to the pedestrian crossings.

The layout includes a number of culverted watercourses beneath adoptable highways. Full structural approval will be needed for each culvert during the Section 38 technical approval process.

The layout details a considerable number of street trees. Some of these will need to be deleted or relocated from the positions indicated during the Section 38 technical approval process as some are within visibility splays or will be found to conflict with street lighting requirements.

Mark Wiltshire

Principal Transport and Development Manager

Highways Development Management

Appendix 2:



Brockleaze BESS



Second Addendum to CAWS Document Dated 22 August 2025

PL/2025/05552

Battery Energy Storage System with associated infrastructure

xx October 2025

1. Introduction

1.1. Community Action: Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) made its initial submission to planning application PL/2025/05552 on 22 August 2025. It subsequently submitted a first addendum to that submission on 2 September 2025 containing a compliance matrix demonstrating that the application is largely non-compliant with known planning policies.

1.2. This document is the second addendum to the CAWS submission dated 22 August 2025 responding to the documents in the developer's further submission on 17 September 2025, and including:

- Risk Management Plan
- Preliminary Site Layout
- Fire Strategy Plan
- Fire Safety Technical Note
- Water Tank Elevations

1.3. This second addendum should be read in conjunction with the previous CAWS submission referenced above.

2. Risk Management Plan

2.1. The superseded Risk Management Plan is a generic document, and is not specific to Brockleaze. The plan should therefore be afforded little weight in the assessment of the application.

2.2. It is noted that the developer confirms that there is no specific legislation regarding the design and safety of BESS facilities. Their stance supports para 5.3.1 of CAWS 22 August 2025 submission, which states that BESS systems are largely unregulated.

2.3. CAWS is disappointed that, despite its previous submission, the developer continues to reference only the BESS fire at Liverpool in 2020, and to disregard the more recent fires at Tilbury (February 2025), Rothienorman (February 2025) and Cirencester (March 2025). Omission of these more recent safety events in the Risk Management Plan undermines the developer's position that the fire safety of BESS equipment is improving. The Risk Management Plan fails to consider any lessons that they might take from these more recent events that might help them mitigate some of the risks of their projects, including the one at Brockleaze.

2.4. The plan only recognises "nearby" risks to the public. This assessment is inappropriate, given the wider risk to the public from toxic clouds and contaminated firewater runoff. CAWS notes that, whilst the developer makes reference to a plume analysis discussion with DWFRS, a detailed analysis has not been included in the superseded documents. CAWS continues to assert that the developer's calculations for firewater and firewater runoff are insufficient (see below).

2.5. CAWS notes the site selection criteria in the Risk Management Plan, and draws attention to various comments submitted by it and others regarding the proximity of a school, care home, housing, natural habitats, water courses, ground water, and pylons etc. CAWS therefore submits that the site fails the developer's own selection criteria.

2.6. CAWS remains concerned about the developer's approach to NFCC Guidance, and the superseded document offers little comfort with regard to the points raised in its NFCC Compliance Matrix; particularly those points covering site-access, container-spacing, water requirements and firewater runoff risks.

3. Preliminary Site Layout

3.1. The only change to the original plan seems to be the inclusion of two small water tanks (1.75m x 7.45m, holding only about 75,000 litres). It is noted that these are located to the northeast and southeast of the site and that, if there were to be an incident, the locations would be impacted by risks associated with the prevailing wind and access.

4. Fire Strategy Plan

4.1. This superseded document fails to address comments made regarding the original plan. The inclusion of two new water tanks is noted, but the size of these tanks (75,000 litres, each) is not discussed in the plan and Ref 2 in the table only references fire hydrants. The utility of these tanks cannot therefore be determined from the Fire Strategy Plan.

5. BESS Fire Safety Technical Note

5.1. The developer's assertion that the BESSs store electricity from renewable sources is highly misleading in this case. The developer has already recognised that it cannot select renewable energy to charge the BESS, and that renewable energy forms no part of their plan. Para 4.2.4 of the CAWS submission dated 22 August 2025 refers.

5.2. As the developer has chosen to reference the EPRI database, it seems reasonable that the recent fires cited at para 2.3 above should be included in the Risk Management Plan.

5.3. The developer states that "Given the boundary cooling approach to handling a fire escalation, whereby no water is sprayed onto a burning unit, contaminated firewater runoff is not anticipated". CAWS is extremely concerned by this statement as cooling water will likely pass through the toxic plume and, depending on wind direction etc, will likely spray burning containers. Hydrogen Fluoride is extremely dangerous; it will cause critical injury on contact with exposed skin and could be lethal if breathed in, even momentarily. Exposure may not cause immediate pain, but serious damage can occur hours later. It is considered to be one of the most dangerous chemicals that we use in our industries..

5.4. The developer's statement that they provide two static Water Tanks with a capacity of 120,000 litres each is misleading. Based on the developer's Water Tank Elevation drawing, the tanks would appear to have a capacity of about 75,000 litres each ($1.75 \times 7.45^2 \times \pi / 4 = 76 \text{ m}^3$). If the developer intends to bury part of the tanks underground, with 1.75m showing above ground, that is not clearly set out in the submitted documentation, and would be of concern in any event, with the close proximity of underground mine workings and the SPZ2. Even if the tanks could be demonstrated to have a 120,000 litre capacity, we note that this is far below the quantity of water needed to control a fire as set out in the CAWS 22 August 2025 submission.

5.5. Comments regarding the generic risk management plan, plume analysis, firewater supply and runoff have already been set out in the CAWS submission dated 22 August 2025 and in this addendum (see above).

6. Summary

6.1. The only material change in the superseded documents is the inclusion of two water tanks, in the same location as, and replacing, two fire hydrants. With questions regarding the size and location of these tanks given the prevailing wind and access, these superseded documents make no material change to the conclusions reached in its previous submissions.

6.2. CAWS therefore continues to assert that the Brockleaze BESS application is unsafe, environmentally damaging, misleading in its claims, and premature. It lacks proper safety, transport, drainage and cumulative impact plans. Community consultation has been ineffective, and no local benefits are proposed. CAWS therefore urges Wiltshire Council to refuse the application.