

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish
Council held on Monday 12th January 2026 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, Martin Franks and Peter Richardson.

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

In attendance: No members of the public were present

On Zoom: No attendees on Zoom

401/25 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.

402/25 Apologies:

None as all members of the committee were present.

403/25 Declarations of Interest:

a. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Franks stated that he might be working at WOMAD and consequently he has a pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 11a (premises license application PR2025 12-591320 World of WOMAD).

b. Dispensation Requests for this Meeting:

None requested.

404/25 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature:

Resolved: Agenda items 11b (Premises Licenses), 12a (Appeal Hearings) and 13 (Planning Enforcement) 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 11b: Premises Licenses: Start of potential legal action

Agenda item 12a: Appeal Hearings: Start of legal action proceedings

Agenda item 13a: Planning Enforcement: Start of potential legal action

405/25 Public Participation:

No members of the public were present.

406/25 New Planning Applications: The Council considered the following applications and made the following comments:

- a. **[PL/2025/09373](#) Wiltshire School Of Gymnastics, Lysander Road, Bowerhill, Melksham, SN12 6SP** Full planning permission: Demolition of existing entrance and construction of a new entrance lobby and internal refurbishment of the reception area. Applicant Name: Wiltshire School of Gymnastics.

Comments: No Objection

- b. **[PL/2025/09489](#) 20 Blenheim Park, Bowerhill, Melksham, SN12 6TA.** Householder planning permission: To build a single-story extension at the rear of the property. To create a new kitchen and dining room. Applicant Name: Mr James Humphry.

Comments: No Objection

- c. **[PL/2025/09841](#) CHURCH FARM, BATH ROAD, SHAW, MELKSHAM, SN12 8EF.** Prior Approval Part 3, Class MA: Commercial, business and service uses to dwellinghouses: Proposed Change of Use to Create 6 Dwellings. Applicant Name: Mr Hillier.

It was noted that application had been called in by Wiltshire Councillor Alford as it is not a site allocation in Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.

Comments: Objection

The Melksham Without Parish Council objects to the proposed Class MA change of use from Class E to residential.

This application should be refused for the same reason as refusal reason 1 for PL/2025/08613 Land South of 214B Corsham Road, Whitley:

“The development as proposed, would materially conflict with the Council's strategic core policies CP1, CP2 and CP15 of the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, by virtue of the site not being allocated for housing and being located outside settlement limits, as well as significantly and demonstrably conflicting with the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 2020-2038, 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.”

The site lies outside the Shaw and Whitley settlement boundary and therefore conflicts with the spatial strategy of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 Policy 6 (Housing in Defined Settlements), which directs housing growth to defined settlements and applies a more restrictive approach to development in the countryside.

For Shaw & Whitley, the figures below show those developments that have planning permission, built already, pending a planning decision, and an estimate based on all the evidence in the Reg 14 A and Reg 14 B consultations (which had 15 and then 10 dwellings) for the Whitley Farm site allocation in the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2*. The total comes to 75, with the emerging Local Plan saying approx. 70/ 73 dwellings requirement for the Large Village of Shaw & Whitley. 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.

*The Reg 14 A and Reg 14 B consultations for Whitley Farm site included viability assessment and initial pre application discussions showed more houses than those in the Submission version of NHP2

Site	Planning Application	Number of Dwellings	Status as at 3/10/25
Middle Farm Site Allocation in adopted NHP2 (55 dwellings)		55	NHP2 made 4th August 2025
Whitley Farm NP2 (number is approximate)	Conservation led redevelopment of redundant modern agricultural buildings and barns and conservation and reuse of Grade II listed Whitley Farm barn 10 & 15 dwellings in Reg 14 versions of the NHP and viability report in NHP evidence base, but no actual housing number in NHP2	10	NHP2 made 4th August 2025
Land Adjacent 1 Eden Grove, Whitley	PL/2023/00625	1	Built
39 Eden Grove, Whitley	21/01791/FUL	2	Built
178 Top Lane, Whitley	20/04234/FUL	1	Built
89 Corsham Road, Whitley	PL/2025/03261	1	Approved 01/7/25
Mavern House, Corsham Road, Shaw	2024/00631	1	Approved

Home Farm, Shaw	PL/2025/00965	2	Awaiting decision
Land South East of Poplar Farm, Shaw	20/11342/FUL	1	Approved
26 Shaw Hill	PL/2023/06990	1	Approved
	Total	75	

The Parish Council is concerned that the proposed conversion to residential use would introduce urbanising effects, including domestic lighting, altered activity patterns, parking and curtilage domestication, which would erode countryside character and settlement separation, contrary to JMNP2 Policy 19 (Separation of Settlements between Shaw and Melksham).

The Council notes that JMNP2 places strong emphasis on the retention of viable employment land (Policy 10 Employment Sites), reflecting an identified shortage of such land in Melksham. While acknowledging the scope of Class MA, the loss of employment floorspace is a material consideration and raises heightened agent-of-change concerns, with potential future conflict between residential occupiers and remaining employment uses.

The application also fails to demonstrate adequate protection of trees, hedgerows and boundary vegetation, as required by JMNP2 Policy 17 (Trees and Hedgerows), particularly given the sensitivity of this rural edge location.

For these reasons, the Parish Council considers that the proposal would result in unacceptable impacts under the Class MA prior approval tests and objects to prior approval being granted.

However, should Wiltshire Council be minded to approve the application, the following requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) are requested:

- The housing mix, type and tenure should be as per the Melksham Housing needs assessment and NHP Policy 6e at Shaw and Whitley, and the Melksham Design guide and NHP Policy 20 (Locally distinctive, High Quality Design):
- Development proposals in locations with known flooding issues should include appropriate mitigation and construction methods, and, where appropriate contributions towards wider catchment projects. This is particularly relevant to the South Brook catchment area (which includes the location of this development) which has been identified as a priority flood risk area due to surface water flooding (Policy 3 Flood Risk and Natural Flood Management).

- d. **PL/2025/09851 Kelso, 161b West Hill, Whitley, Melksham, SN12 8RB.**
 Householder planning permission: Erection of single storey side/rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory, garage external shed/store. Installation of a wood burner and flue. Applicant Name: Hawker & Rogers.

Comments: No Objection

407/25 Amended Plans/Additional Information: The Council considered the following amended applications and made the following comments:

- a. **PL/2025/05552 Land South of Brockleaze, Neston, Corsham, SN13 9TE.** Full planning permission: Battery Energy Storage System with associated infrastructure.

Comments: Members resolved to endorse the comments submitted by Community Action Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) by submitting, the CAWS authored, 'Brockleaze Addendum 5 Final' together with a summary covering objection letter.

Objection in Support of CAWS

Melksham Without Parish Council supports and endorses the objections submitted by Community Action: Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) in respect of planning application PL/2025/05552 for the Brockleaze Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). The Parish Council shares CAWS's serious concerns regarding flood risk, hydrology, fire safety, emergency response capacity and cumulative impact, which together render this proposal unacceptable in its proposed location.

The Parish Council is particularly concerned about the siting of the development within the South Brook headwater catchment and a designated Source Protection Zone that supports public drinking water supplies. Surface water from the application site flows directly through Whitley and downstream towards Shaw and the River Avon. In such a tightly connected headwater system, upstream disturbance cannot be isolated from downstream effects. We agree with CAWS that the Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy rely on generic assumptions which fail to reflect the realities of a sensitive and saturated catchment with clear contamination pathways and multiple downstream receptors.

Construction-phase impacts represent a significant and under-assessed risk. Proposed cable trenching, soil compaction, haul routes and temporary drainage works would take place in an environment where hydrological control is inherently limited. Any failure, exceedance or misdirection of water during construction could result in irreversible contamination of groundwater, aquifers, agricultural land or historic stone mine systems. These risks are not adequately assessed at a catchment or cumulative level and cannot reasonably be assumed to remain confined within the application boundary.

Fire safety is a further major concern. The Brockleaze BESS is a very large installation, materially increasing both the likelihood and potential consequences of a serious fire involving multi-container escalation. The application relies on minimum baseline firewater assumptions and does not present credible worst-case modelling of fire duration, water demand or containment. In a Source Protection Zone, failure to contain contaminated firewater would pose an unacceptable risk to public water supplies and downstream watercourses.

The Parish Council is also concerned by the absence of any meaningful cumulative assessment of emergency response capacity in an area already subject to intense energy infrastructure clustering. Applying the precautionary principle, and for the reasons set out by CAWS, Melksham Without Parish

Council considers that planning permission for application PL/2025/05552 should be refused

408/25 Current planning application: 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

The new comments from Drainage, Melksham Town Council, Conservation, Arboriculture, Environment Agency and Public Open Space were noted. It was noted that Melksham Town Council had submitted an objection to the development despite it being an allocated site (Policy 18) in the emerging Wiltshire Council Local Plan.

The Clerk updated that she is working with Wiltshire Council on the plans for the play area to incorporate the requirements from the parish council. The details will be included in the S106 agreement.

Members noted the response to their previous comments regarding extinguishment of MELK103.

Comments: Members do not support the extinguishment of MELK103, as extinguishment would allow the land to be incorporated into residential curtilage, resulting in the loss of green infrastructure. This would be contrary to Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 Policy 12 (Green and Blue Infrastructure), which seeks to protect and retain green corridors, support biodiversity and wildlife connectivity, and resist the loss or fragmentation of green infrastructure through development or private enclosure.

- b. **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

Members were disappointed to the response from Wiltshire Council regarding a holistic review of A365 Bowerhill and that highways improvements would only be considered for the land north of Bath Road application (PL/2025/06749) as highways matters had already been decided for land at Bowerhill Lane (PL/2025/06105) and Gompels warehouse (PL/2024/11426).

Whilst members understood that officers have reviewed the planning applications individually and carefully, they want to ask again that a comprehensive review of all the issues, including the planning applications, are considered **together** holistically.

Resolved: To ask again that the stretch of road from the Spa Road roundabout to the east of Turnpike Garage is reviewed, and that there is an opportunity to ask developers to pay for this and contribute to its recommendations.

To help visualise the concerns of the parish council in this location, an annotated map of the stretch of the A365 will be sent.

Comments: Members noted and supported the provision of a roundabout at the entrance to the site as described in the comments submitted by Highways/Sustainable Transport in the Memorandum dated 14th November 2025.

In addition, the Highways/Sustainable Transport comments include provision of a new 3m cycleway/ footway on the north side of the A365 between the site junction and across the full frontage of the Melksham Oak Community school site/junction. If this is established, members would like a bus stop (bus shelter and real time information) to be included opposite the existing bus stop on the south side of the road. It was noted that the lay-by is currently used as an informal bus stop to pick-up school children travelling in the direction of Devizes.

It was noted that a meeting is scheduled with the developer, Hannick on 11th February 2026.

c. **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

Councillor Glover queried whether a comment previously submitted from the parish council about safe walking routes to the school was correct.

Resolved: Officers to investigate and, if necessary, revise or clarify the comment.

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

Members were disappointed in the response received from Nic Thomas in relation to their Freedom of Information request follow up.

Recommendation: to update the Planning Committee Terms of Reference to give delegated authority to the planning committee to include requests for Wiltshire Council Economic Development team input on planning applications when they consider it appropriate.

Comments: To add a request for Wiltshire Council Economic Development team input for application PL/2025/09841 Church Farm, Shaw.

The Clerk noted that the parish council had received a Freedom of Information request relating any goods, services or support received by Melksham Without Parish Council or Councillors from Gompels in the last 10 years. Members questioned the reasonableness of the request and were concerned about the amount of Officer time needed to compile the response.

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

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

PL/2022/08504. Applicant Name: BWD Trading

It was noted that the Developer had requested a meeting on either Tuesday 27th January or Thursday 29th January 2026 prior to resubmitting their plans.

f. **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).

Members asked for an update on the progress of the Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) for the trees on the triangle of land between Berryfield Lane and Berryfield Park (MIN 343/25e). The Clerk explained that the TPOs would be progressed once the tree survey was complete.

g. **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.

Members noted the draft Heads of Terms for the Section 106 agreement and considered a detailed comparison of the Heads of Terms and Policy 7.5 of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (Land at Middle Farm, Whitley). It was noted that some of the identified gaps would be addressed by conditions on the planning approval (if granted).

Comments: Members request the following gaps with Policy 7.5 of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (Land at Middle Farm, Whitley) are added to the Section 106 agreement:

Development proposals for the site will:

- 12. Include sustainable drainage to manage the discharge of surface water to mitigate flood risk within the site and prevent **and where possible reduce flood risk to neighbouring land where it relates to the allocation site.**
- 14. Provide safe and convenient walking and wheeling connections to existing pavements in Corsham Road and the existing Public Right of Way through the site, including a pavement on the development side of Corsham Road.
- 15. Fund a new pedestrian crossing of Corsham Road to adoptable standard
- 19. Make appropriate and relevant financial contributions to infrastructure, which may include proportionate contributions to measures to positively support walking, wheeling and public transport use.

h. **PL/2025/08987 Land at First Lane, Whitley, SN12 8RL**

Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for access

for the erection of 2 No. self-build plots and associated works. Applicant Name: Mr S.A Rogers

It was noted that a revised comment with a Holding Objection had been received from Drainage.

409/25 Proposed Energy Installations

a. Lime Down Solar

The comments submitted on behalf of Community Action Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) and on behalf of Melksham Without Parish Council were noted.

Councillor Richardson explained that he had been disappointed with strength of the comments proposed by Wiltshire Council, and even though he had provided a number of points directly to the Cabinet member not all of these had been mentioned in the Extraordinary Cabinet meeting to discuss the response. It was noted that the parish council have not seen the final comments submitted by Wiltshire Council, but Councillor Richardson is concerned that the cumulative impact will not be emphasised strongly enough.

b. Wick Solar Farm ([20/06840/FUL](#)), Studley Solar Farm ([PL/2021/08690](#)) and associated cable installation ([PL/2025/05856](#))

Members noted that a public consultation event regarding Studley cable route was being held in Whitley Reading Rooms on Wednesday 14th January 2026, 6-8pm.

Additionally, it was noted that Aureos are holding public consultation events about the Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSEN) works between Norrington and the Melksham substation, (including Corsham Road, Shaw Hill and Westlands Lane) on Tuesday 20th January and Thursday 22nd January 2026 at Shaw School 5 to 8.15pm.

Members agreed that they would meet with contractor Aureos on Thursday 22nd January 2026 during the day.

It was noted that combined works from the Studley Farm contractor and Aureos would start in Westlands Lane on 26th January 2026.

Councillor Richardson expressed concern that later phases of both the Studley cable route work and the Aureos work would not be co-ordinated and would occur concurrently. Members were concerned about the impact of residents in Shaw and Whitley but also the impact of the bus routes which run through the villages.

Recommendation: Issue of roadworks in Shaw and Whitley to be raised with Phil Grocock, Wiltshire Council Bus Network Manager.

c. To receive an update on Wiltshire Council Engagement about Cumulative Impact.

It was noted that a meeting of the Clerk, CAWS and Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford with Wiltshire Council Planning, Highways and Sustainable Transport to discuss cumulative impact was planned for Thursday 15th January 2026.

410/25 Planning Policy:

a. Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP):

In order to explore the technology, Officers had used AI tool, Chat GPT, to produce a comparison of the information submitted as part of the planning application for PL/2025/09841 Church Farm Shaw against the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2, the Wiltshire Core Strategy, the draft Wiltshire Local Plan, Melksham and Wiltshire Design Guides and the current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Members considered the output and while they felt it was useful as a starting point for preparing responses to planning consultations, they emphasised the need to sense check the output.

b. Wiltshire Council's Draft Local Plan Examination: To consider any updates <https://www.localplanservices.co.uk/wiltshirelpexamination>

Members noted the Wiltshire Local Plan Examination Inspectors' post Stage 2 hearings letter.

c. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The start of the consultation on changes to NPPF and the consultation deadline of 10th March 2026 were noted. It was also noted that professional bodies, such as SLCC and NALC have not yet published their commentary.

Resolved: To consider a preparing a response to the consultation at a Planning Committee Meeting in February 2026.

d. It was noted that the **Planning and Infrastructure Act** had become effective in December 2025.

411/25 Premises Licenses applications and decisions:

a. [PR2025 12-591320](#) World of WOMAD Ltd, Neston Park Home, Neston, Corsham, SN13 9TG. Consultation ends 7th January 2026.

Members reviewed the response to the license application made by Atworth Parish Council.

Comments: Members hope that the event is successful but support the concerns raised by Atworth Parish Council and expect that the additional information requested about noise levels and traffic management are provided by the event organisers. They also want to highlight the roadworks planned in Shaw, Whitley and Beanacre related to installation of electrical cable route to the Melksham Sub-station in Beanacre and the risk of traffic using routes the villages to avoid traffic congestion on the main roads from the event.

It was noted that the consultation ended on 7th January 2026, but members felt that their comments should still be submitted.

b. Correspondence relating to New Inn, Berryfield.

Held in Closed Session at the end of the meeting

Resolved Wiltshire Council Enforcement to be notified of issues at the New Inn, Berryfield related to:

- Licensing
- Planning
- Road closures
- Drainage

412/25 Appeals

Held in closed session at the end of the meeting.

- a. Appeal Hearings

[PL/2024/07097](#): Land south of Snarlton Farm – start Tuesday 20th January 2026

[PL/2024/10674](#): Land off Woodrow Road – start Tuesday 3rd February 2026

The Clerk provided an update on who would speak on behalf of the parish council at each appeal and the points that they would raise. It was noted a pre-brief meeting had been held, which was attended by the 27 people to be involved.

- b. [PL/2023/05883](#): Land to the rear of 52e, Chapel Lane, Beanacre.

The final comments from Appellant were noted.

413/25 Planning Enforcement: To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.

Held in closed session at the end of the meeting.

- a. Top Lane, Whitley

Resolved Wiltshire Council Enforcement to be asked to clarify the status of building work at Slade's Farm, Top Lane, Whitley.

414/25 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (*Standing Item*)

- a. Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements

- i. Pathfinder Place

The Clerk confirmed that an inspection of the bus shelters was planned but that she would not be attending as sign off was for Wiltshire Council.

- ii. To receive feedback from S106 cemetery contribution requests (if received)

No response received

- iii. To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers

The Clerk noted that she had circulated plans of the play equipment that would be provided on phase 1 of Townsend Farm by the developer.

She also noted that there is money allocated for Bowerhill Sports Field in the S106 for Phase 1 of Townsend Farm. She has requested this money for

seeding and drainage of the pitches (supported by the quotations). An off site play area contribution had been secured for Phase 2, and the Clerk had asked that this is used for development of Berryfield play area, owned by the parish council.

b. Contact with developers:

- i. **Resolved:** To approve the notes from meeting for reserved matters for Land at Blackmore Farm with David Wilson Homes (Outline PL/2023/11188) held on 10th December 2025 (attached).
- ii. To arrange/provide feedback from meeting with new owners of Cooper Tires site related to demolition works.

The Clerk noted that she is trying to make contact with the developer and that she is concerned that the demolition is in progress and it is not clear that the developer is aware of the need to protect the heritage assets as defined in Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Policy 7.1.

Meeting closed at 9:10 pm

Chairman, 26th January 2026

**NOTES OF MEETING WITH DAVID WILSON HOMES
ON WEDNESDAY 10th DECEMBER 2025 AT 2:00PM
RE: BLACKMORE FARM**

Present: Councillor Richard Wood (Chair of Planning)
Councillor Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning)
Councillor Mark Harris (Planning Committee Member)
Wiltshire Councillor Charlie Stokes (Melksham East)
Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill)
Teresa Strange (Parish Clerk, Melksham Without)
Fiona Dey (Parish Officer, Melksham Without)

Callum Warren (TFA Ltd)
Peter Lawson (Barrat Redrow)
Cecelia Hughes (David Wilson Redrow)

Outline planning for the Blackmore Farm site (PL/2023/11188) was approved in May 2025. Site has since been sold onto David Wilson Homes.

David Wilson Homes expect to submit a reserved matters application in early January 2026. They are in the very early stages of pre-application discussion with Wiltshire Council. They are constrained by the conditions from the outline planning approval.

The Developers shared draft plans for phase 1 of the development.

Design

Blackmore Farm is a large development so will be built in 2 phases.

The development will have 40% affordable housing. Affordable housing will be front loaded in phase 1 (118 affordable vs 111 open market) compared with phase 2 (82 affordable vs 189 open market). It was noted that the housing mix was defined in the outline application. A number of the properties (20) will be adapted for accessibility.

The development will be higher density in the north of the site (like the houses along Sandridge Road) and lower density in the south adjacent to the rural areas.

Councillors commented that affordable housing seems to be clustered together meaning that the development may not be tenant blind (as required by Wiltshire Council policies) – it was noted that this may be due to front loading the affordable provision.

The Developers highlighted that there is a bat route on the eastern side of the site leading to lighting restrictions and driving some of the housing orientation decisions.

Councillors highlighted that the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan includes a housing needs assessment and a design guide which should be followed.

Solar panels will be included as per the sustainability energy strategy condition. However, the number of heat pumps that can be installed is limited by the electricity provision. Therefore, some properties will be built with gas boilers.

Councillors were concerned that the long straight road past the community hub may encourage speeding and therefore suggested that the developers include traffic calming measures.

Vehicle Access

Councillors remain concerned that there will be a single access to the development from A3102 – serving 500 houses, a primary school, a community centre and employment land. Councillors are also concerned that the junction is a turning with ghost islands. It was noted that access via a roundabout was not supported by Highways during the outline application consultation phase and therefore was changed to the current arrangement.

Construction Traffic Access

Construction access is proposed to be via the footpath/emergency secondary access which would join the A3102 between Blackmore Farm and Lopes Close. Concerns remain about traffic turning off and onto the A3102. The importance of a detailed construction traffic management plan was highlighted. A temporary reduction of the speed limit on the A3102 should be considered. Councillors stressed that they will want to see the construction traffic management plan as part of the reserved matters application.

Connectivity

Councillors were keen to ensure that the site is porous with connectivity from the site particularly to the existing developments to the west. It was noted that the strip of land between the development site and Eastern Way is not in the control of the developers. The developer suggested that the parish council could ask the landowner for agreement to establish a permissive pathway across the land, and then the developer could put in a temporary footpath.

Community Hub

It was noted that the “Community Hub” land is a long and narrow plot – the Developer will provide information on the dimensions of the plot. Details of the proposed community centre are still being developed between the parish council and Melksham Town Council. To provide an indication of the size on the plan, the Developer offered to plot the Community Hub with a footprint 25% larger than the Berryfield Village Hall (dimensions to be provided to the Developer). It was also discussed that the Community Hub might a 2-storey building.

The parish council were keen to share experiences and learning from building Berryfield Village Hall, especially related to sound proofing/noise restrictions. They suggested that it might be better to provide extra sound proofing on dwellings near to the Community Hub, rather than have very limiting noise restrictions on the Hub (which were required for Berryfield).

It was confirmed that, as per the s106 agreement, the Developer would pay 25% of their contribution towards the Community Hub up-front, with the remaining 75% paid on transfer of the Community Hub Land.

The Developers do not want to construct the Community Hub, as it doesn't fit with their business model. It was noted that construction of the Community Hub will need to be co-ordinated with the Developer's building works.

Parking

Councillors welcomed the planned parking bays as they reduce the need for on-street parking. Concerns were raised generally about the prevalence of trade vans parking on other housing developments around Melksham parking and questioned whether additional parking is required. It was noted that the parking provision will be in line with Wiltshire Council guidelines.

Play Areas and Mobility Hub

The Clerk questioned whether the play area currently marked on the plan as adjacent to the employment land should be closer the dwellings being built in Phase 1. It was also highlighted to the Developer, that some areas should be kept for informal play e.g. having a mown grass area to play football.

Developer commented that a mobility hub, with a major bus stop, bus turning point and EV charging, would be provided but its location has not been defined. It was noted that bus routed and provision of bus stops is still to be considered.

Melksham Without Parish Council Requests

Councillors were positive about the plans presented and the level of engagement from the Developer.

For consistency with other developments, Councillors requested that they are involved in street naming, design of play areas (noting that Wiltshire Council have a standard for play equipment) and public art.

Timelines

Key timelines are not yet available from the Developer, but it was estimated that it will be at least 9 months before house building starts.

Meeting closed at 3:35pm