

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council
held on Monday 22nd June 2026 at Melksham Without Parish Council
Offices (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, SN12
6ES at 7:00pm**

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

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

In attendance: Councillor Hemmings (as an observer)

On Zoom: Councillor Griffiths (as an observer) and 1 member of the public (part)

059/26 Welcome, Housekeeping and Announcements

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members discussed Wiltshire Council's refusal of the Wiltshire Throwback Festival application (PL/2026/01809) to be held at Melksham Rugby Club, Oakfields. It was noted that the decision had been issued only shortly before the event was due to take place and related principally to ecology and noise concerns.

Members reviewed the delegated officer report and decision notice and understand that the decision related principally to ecology and noise concerns. They also recognised that they may not be aware of all background information, technical advice or procedural considerations which informed the handling and timing of the application. However, Members expressed concern that the decision was issued only shortly before the event was due to take place. This caused significant uncertainty for the organisers, attendees and others affected.

Members noted that the organisers had responded to matters raised through the consultation process, including clarification that the application related to a one-off event, and that a similar event had previously been held at the site. Members therefore queried whether the matters which ultimately led to refusal could have been identified and addressed earlier in the process.

Resolved: To write to Wiltshire Council:

- expressing concern regarding the late determination of the WTF application (PL/2026/01809) and the uncertainty caused to organisers and attendees,
- requesting that Wiltshire Council review the handling and timing of this application and provide an explanation as to why the decision was issued so close to the proposed event date.

060/26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Richardson who was returning from holiday. The Clerk advised that comments had been obtained from Councillor Richardson on agenda items where appropriate.

Resolved: To approve and accept the reasons for absence.

The Clerk advised that apologies had also been received from Wiltshire Councillors Holder, Alford and Griffin.

061/26 Declarations of Interest

a. Declarations of Interest

None.

b. Dispensation Requests

None received.

062/26 Consideration of Items 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 as required as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

None identified

063/26 Public Participation

Standing Orders were suspended for public participation.

MP1 (on Zoom): PL/2026/02966 – East of Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common.

MP1 explained that whilst the applicant had engaged constructively with residents of Lopes Close and had amended aspects of the proposal following consultation, significant concerns remained.

Particular concerns raised included:

- The proximity of proposed development to existing properties and resulting loss of privacy and overlooking. Continued impact upon neighbouring residents despite revisions to the layout.
- Existing traffic conditions on Sandridge Road, which was described as already heavily trafficked and already difficult to access at peak periods. The impact of additional traffic arising from approved and proposed developments in the area.
- Loss of green space and impacts on wildlife.
- Pressure on local healthcare provision, including GP and NHS dental services. Concerns regarding whether local infrastructure could support further development and the impact on existing Melksham residents.
- The fact that the site was not included within the adopted planning strategy and concerns regarding the cumulative scale of growth already approved in eastern Melksham.

Members thanked the resident for attending and for the detailed comments provided.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

064/26 New Planning Applications

a. PL/2026/02966 – Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common, Melksham: Outline planning application for up to 275 dwellings

It was noted that the Clerk had sought clarification from Wiltshire Council regarding safeguarding of a future eastern bypass route and was waiting for a response.

Comments: OBJECT

Members considered the outline application alongside comments previously submitted during the developer's consultation exercise.

They reiterated their previously raised concerns, including access, the route of the proposed Melksham Bypass, the speculative nature of the development and the cumulative impact of further housing growth on local infrastructure, including healthcare provision, transport networks and community facilities. Members considered that the proposal conflicted with the strategic principles of Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 (JMNP2), particularly those relating to infrastructure planning, sustainable transport and coordinated development.

Concern was again expressed that the proposed development could prejudice the future delivery of an eastern bypass for Melksham, contrary to long-standing planning aspirations, the JMNP2 Priority Statement supporting an eastern bypass, and Policy 17 of the withdrawn Wiltshire Local Plan. Policy 17 states that development should not undermine the delivery of an A350 bypass to the east of Melksham. Although the policy does not safeguard a specific route, it clearly demonstrates that an eastern A350 bypass for Melksham is recognised and supported in principle, and that development should not compromise its future delivery.

Members acknowledged that the developers had amended the plans for the site adjacent to Lopes Close; however, they remained concerned about separation of the proposed Lopes Close element from the remainder of the development and shared the residents' overlooking and amenity concerns.

The comments previously submitted during the developer's consultation exercise will be submitted to the planning application, with more detailed policy comments re the bypass and that they supported the concerns of the residents of Lopes Close together with the Parish Council's standard list of S106 requests.

b. PL/2026/03064 – Barns at Beanacre Manor, Beanacre: Listed Building Consent

Comments: NO OBJECTION

c. PL/2026/02752 – Wick Farm Solar Farm: Variation of Conditions

Members noted that the application principally related to:

- Revised internal cable routing arrangements to use an alternative railway underpass.
- Change of the fixing method of the solar panels to the ground
- Associated amendments to approved drawings and documentation.

Comments: NO OBJECTION

d. PL/2026/03357 – Home Farm, Shaw Hill: Reserved Matters Application

Members considered the reserved matters submission for two dwellings.

Comments: OBJECT

Members noted that the principle of residential development, together with the access and layout, had already been established through the grant of outline planning permission PL/2025/00965.

Members acknowledged the biodiversity enhancements proposed within the application and welcomed the retention of a broadly farmstead-inspired layout. However, they remained concerned regarding the scale, massing and appearance of the proposed dwellings and their relationship to the historic character of Home Farm.

Members noted the historic significance of Home Farm as the principal farmstead associated with Shaw Hill House and the importance of retaining the legibility of the historic agricultural complex. Members were concerned that the proposed dwellings, by virtue of their scale, massing and highly domestic appearance, risk weakening the ability to appreciate the site's origins as a coherent estate farmstead.

Should Wiltshire Council be minded to approve the application, the Parish Council requests that particular attention be given to securing high-quality materials, careful detailing, and landscaping measures that reinforce the historic farmstead character of the site and minimise the visual impact of the proposed dwellings.

Members also noted that the applicant's Planning Statement made extensive reference to national and Wiltshire planning policy but contained no reference to the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan and its detailed Design Code and Guidelines.

065/26 Amended Plans / Additional Information

None

066/26 Current Planning Applications

- a. [PL/2024/10345 \(FULL\)](#) and [PL/2025/09780 \(OUT\)](#) **Land north of the A3102, Melksham (New Road Farm).**

No new documents or comments.

- b. [PL/2026/01555](#) - **Land at Blackmore Farm, Sandridge Common, Melksham, SN12 7QS.** A reserved matters application (appearance, layout, scale and landscaping) for 229 dwellings and associated infrastructure

The Committee received an update on the Reserved Matters application relating to the first phase of the wider Blackmore Farm allocation.

Members were advised that no response had been received from Wiltshire Council regarding previous requests to reconsider the approved junction arrangement and investigate the potential for a roundabout solution.

The Clerk reported that the application was now subject to a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) and had been transferred to a different case officer. Members expressed frustration that previous enquiries appeared to have stalled during the transfer of responsibility.

Discussion took place regarding whether it would be appropriate to undertake a detailed review of the application at the current stage. Members considered that

a significant number of consultees had requested amendments and that it remained unclear whether substantial changes might yet be made.

Objections submitted by neighbouring landowners concerning rights of way and access arrangements were noted.

Members agreed that, until further clarification was obtained regarding the PPA process and potential amendments, a further detailed review would be premature.

c. [PL/2025/07391](#) - **Land South of Western Way, Melksham, Wiltshire.**

Reserved Matters (appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) for 210 residential dwellings (Use Class C3), along with associated open space, landscaping, and parking

Members revisited ongoing concerns regarding construction access arrangements and reiterated support for requests that construction traffic use the approved emergency access onto the A365 rather than being routed through Maitland Place. Members also reiterated their support for residents' requests that, once upgraded, the access could potentially serve as the principal vehicular access to the development.

Resolved: To share the parish council comments in support of the Residents' Association's position and endorsement of the request for a permanent left-in/left-out access arrangement onto the A365 directly with the developers and to request the developers consider a Section 73 agreement to enable the changes.

d. [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)

Members considered a concern raised regarding the potential for rat-running through local roads if congestion occurred on the A365 and A350 corridors. Whilst acknowledging that traffic may occasionally divert during major incidents, Members considered that routes such as Hornchurch Road were generally unsuitable as regular alternatives due to their narrow and indirect nature. The concern was noted, but no further action was considered necessary at this stage.

e. [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

The Committee reviewed previous concerns regarding cumulative highway impacts and the absence of a ghost island right-turn lane.

Members expressed concern that Wiltshire Council officers had previously indicated that aspects of the highway arrangements had effectively been agreed, despite the fact that certain details had not yet been formally approved through the planning process.

Discussion took place regarding the importance of ensuring that cumulative impacts of development were properly considered and that infrastructure improvements should not be dismissed as being "too late" to secure.

Members agreed that further clarification should be sought from Wiltshire Council.

Resolved:

- To continue pressing Wiltshire Council for clarification regarding highway mitigation measures.
- To challenge any suggestion that unresolved matters can no longer be addressed before determination.

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).

The Committee received an update regarding revised drainage submissions.

The Clerk reported that whilst Wiltshire Council's Drainage Team had now removed its objection to the drainage proposals, a number of concerns previously raised by the Parish Council remained unresolved.

Comments:

The Drainage Team comments v4 addresses the strategic flood-risk principle: whether the development can drain to Berryfield Brook without increasing flood risk, and whether the drainage strategy can be secured by condition. However, the Parish Council's comments are more localised and practical, and several of them are not fully resolved by the latest Drainage response.

The parish council's concerns about Berryfield Park being a 1940s MOD concrete road and therefore the difficulty of excavation and reinstatement, and the known ponding/flooding at Semington Road/Berryfield Park and Berryfield Lane by the New Inn are not directly answered in the drainage response. The Drainage conditions cover drainage design and construction-phase drainage, but they do not specifically require the applicant to address those existing local highway drainage problems while the road is being opened up.

The concern about the sewer route crossing Selwood Housing land and Melksham Without Parish Council land is still valid. The suggested informatives say evidence of third-party agreement for discharge to another system, and discharge agreements temporary and permanent, are required at relevant stages. But the response does not confirm that the applicant has agreed the route with affected landowners, including the Parish Council – we can confirm that this has not been raised or discussed with the parish council at all.

The point about the TPO tree behind the New Inn does not appear to address arboricultural impacts or root protection from the sewer installation. That presumably would need to be secured through tree protection / construction method controls, not just drainage conditions.

The Parish Council requests that any permission (if given) includes sufficiently detailed conditions requiring agreement of the final sewer route, landowner consents, construction methodology, reinstatement details, tree protection measures, and measures to ensure the works do not worsen — and where possible help address — existing local flooding issues, in accordance with Melksham Neighbourhood Plan 2 - Policy 3.

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.

No updates.

h. **PL/2026/02084 – 554 Canal Bridge, Semington:** Full planning permission for 1 dwelling

Comments:

The Committee considered correspondence received from the applicant's planning agent in response to the Parish Council's previous objections.

Members noted that the agent had challenged the Parish Council's interpretation of JMNP2 Policy 6 (Settlement Boundaries) and Policy 19 (Green Buffers and Separation).

Discussion took place regarding the recent appeal decision relating to the Permission in Principle application for land south of 214B Corsham Road (PL/2025/08613), where the Planning Inspector had attached significant weight to both policies when dismissing the appeal.

Members considered that the Inspector's findings reinforced the validity of the Parish Council's position and provided additional support for maintaining objections to developments that would erode important settlement gaps.

The council remained concerned that approval of the proposal could establish an undesirable precedent for further encroachment into the countryside between settlements.

067/26 Proposed Energy Installations

a. Lime Down Solar

The Committee received an update regarding the Development Consent Order process.

Members were reminded that the Examining Authority had specifically invited comments from local councils regarding cumulative impacts arising from multiple large-scale energy projects.

The Parish Council had submitted representations and had encouraged neighbouring parish and town councils to do likewise. Members welcomed the increasing recognition being given to cumulative impact issues across the north of the parish.

The Committee also noted that Wiltshire Council had now completed the Local Impact Report requested by the Examining Authority.

b. Cable Route for Norrington Spring Park Project (Aureos for SSEN Distribution) and Studley Solar Farm (DNOC for Verdant Energy)

Discussion took place regarding flooding issues affecting Shaw and Whitley. Members were reminded that historic flooding problems were associated with insufficient culvert capacity beneath Corsham Road and that opportunities to improve drainage infrastructure should be explored whenever major works were undertaken.

It was suggested that the proposed cable route works could provide an opportunity to address some long-standing drainage issues if appropriate discussions took place with the developer and relevant authorities.

Members agreed that the matter should be raised at the forthcoming meeting with Aureos.

Resolved: To request improvements to the culvert beneath Corsham Road at the meeting with Aureos.

c. [PL/2025/05552](#) **Land South of Brockleaze, Neston, Corsham, SN13 9TE.**

No new documents or comments.

It was noted that the decision to refuse Whistle Mead Solar Farm (PL/2023/01914) had been appealed.

d. **Wiltshire Council Engagement on Cumulative Impact**

No response had yet been received from Wiltshire Council.

068/26 Planning Policy

a. **Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (NHP):**

No new items were added to the list of items to be included in a future review of the Neighbourhood Plan (standing agenda item to reflect on responses to planning applications for future review of the Neighbourhood Plan)

b. **Wiltshire Council's Draft Local Plan:**

No response had yet been received from Wiltshire Council on the impact of the withdrawal of the draft Local Plan.

Members discussed Wiltshire Council's recently published five-year housing land supply figure and expressed frustration that it was based on data from April 2025. Members questioned why it took Wiltshire Council nine months to produce the housing land supply calculation when appellants and developers are frequently able to prepare housing land supply figures within much shorter timescales to support planning appeals. The Committee considered that more timely publication of the Council's own figures would help reduce the number of speculative housing applications submitted on the basis of an alleged shortfall in housing land supply.

Resolved: To write to Wiltshire Council asking why the publication of the five-year housing land supply figure takes so long, whether the process could be accelerated, and requesting that future figures are published more promptly so they remain current and useful in planning decision-making.

069/26 Appeals

a. **Snarlton Farm Appeal**

Members noted that the Planning Inspector had invited further comments following confirmation that the Wiltshire Local Plan Review had been withdrawn and Woodrow Row appeal decision.

Due to the short timescale provided for responses, additional comments had been submitted by the Clerk on behalf of the Parish Council in consultation with the Chair.

Members were advised that Wiltshire Council's position had not changed and that the Parish Council's submission had reinforced concerns regarding piecemeal development and the need for comprehensive planning of eastern Melksham. Place Studios had provided an additional comment for the submission.

It was noted that the appeal has now been passed to the Secretary of State and that a decision is expected by 14 September 2026.

Resolved: To ratify the additional comments submitted to the Planning Inspector related to the Snarlton Farm appeal.

Recommendation: To approve any reasonable associated costs incurred in obtaining additional commentary from Place Studios.

b. Land South of 214B Corsham Road Appeal Decision

The Committee welcomed the dismissal of the appeal.

Members noted that the Planning Inspector had given significant weight to JMNP2 Policy 6 (Settlement Boundaries) and Policy 19 (Green Buffers and Separation), reinforcing the Parish Council's long-held interpretation of those policies.

Discussion took place regarding the wider implications of the decision for current planning applications elsewhere within the parish.

Members considered that the decision provided useful support for ongoing objections to developments that would undermine settlement separation or erode important green gaps.

Whilst noting that future decisions could be influenced by wider planning circumstances, Members regarded the appeal outcome as a significant success for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Resolved: To submit supplementary comments to draw the appeal decision and the Inspector's findings to the attention of planning officers considering relevant applications (PL/2026/02084: 554 Canal Bridge and PL/2025/03513: Land North of Top Lane, Whitley)

070/26 Planning Enforcement

a. Wick Farm / Studley Solar Cable Works

Members noted that enquiries had been made regarding concerns previously raised regarding works undertaken in connection with the Studley and Wick solar projects and whether certain cable route works had commenced before the relevant planning permissions had been granted.

The Clerk reported that discussions with enforcement officers had failed to provide a satisfactory explanation and that there appeared to be confusion regarding the scope of the permissions involved.

Resolved: The Clerk to continue pursuing clarification regarding the sequence of approvals and works undertaken.

071/26 Townsend Farm Development (PL/20/07334 and PL/2022/08155)

Members noted that a meeting with the developer was planned for Tuesday 14th July 2026 at 12:30pm.

072/26 S106 Agreements and Developer Meetings

a. Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements

i. Pathfinder Place

An update from Wiltshire Councillor Holder had been shared with Members. Highways work is still to be completed under section 38 (related to new estate roads) and section 278 (related to existing public highways) agreements. Wiltshire Councillor Holder continues to chase Taylor Wimpey

- ii. S106 decisions made under delegated powers

None.

b. Contact with developers:

- i. Bellway

Members noted a forthcoming meeting with Bellway on 24 June 2026 at 2pm and a public consultation planned for 10 July 2026 relating to land between Townsend Farm and Berryfield Lane.

c. Transparency of Draft S106 Agreements

- i. Flood Mitigation

Discussion took place regarding the requirement within Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3 (Flood Risk and Natural Flood Management) for wider flood mitigation measures beyond individual development sites. Concern was expressed that opportunities to secure contributions towards improvements continue to be missed. For example, no contributions will be received from the Land at Upside development (PL/2022/06221) for 112 dwellings.

The Clerk reiterated that a contribution towards the wider catchment area was still being pursued for the Corsham Road development (PL/2024/09725 – Middle Farm).

073/26 Beanacre Cricket Club Pavilion (PL/2026/01787)

The Clerk provided an update regarding the outstanding planning application for the proposed pavilion. She explained that a decision had still not been reached despite the Cricket Club going through the pre-application process with Wiltshire Council in November 2025, and additional information being provided to address consultee comments in May 2026. The Cricket Club are concerned that further delays could jeopardise funding already secured for the project.

The Clerk and Councillor Hemmings have requested that Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford pursue the matter with planning officers.

Meeting closed at 8:22 pm.

Chairman, 29th June 2026