



# Public Document Pack

## Melksham Town Council

Town Hall, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
Tel: (01225) 704187

Town Clerk and RFO Linda Roberts BA(Hons) PGCAP, FHEA,  
FLSCC

To: Councillor G Ellis (Chair)  
Councillor G Cooke (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor S Crundell  
Councillor C Goodhind  
Councillor J Oatley  
Councillor S Rabey

4 October 2022

Dear Councillors

In accordance with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972, Sch 12, paras 10 (2)(b) you are invited to attend the **Economic Development and Planning Committee** meeting of Melksham Town Council. The meeting will be held at the Town Hall on **Monday 10th October 2022** commencing at **7.00 pm**.

A period of public participation will take place in accordance with Standing Order 3(e) prior to the formal opening of the meeting. The Press and Public are welcome to attend this meeting in person, alternatively the public and press may join the meeting via Zoom.

In accordance with the Council's commitment to being open and transparent; all Town Council meetings are recorded and broadcast live. The right to do so was established under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L A Roberts BA(Hons), PGCAP, FHEA, FSLCC  
Town Clerk and RFO

**Melksham Town Council  
Economic Development and Planning Committee  
Monday 10 October 2022  
At 7.00 pm at the Town Hall**

**Public Participation** – To receive questions from members of the public.

*In the exercise of Council functions. Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and the need to conserve biodiversity. The Council also has a duty to tackle discrimination, provide equality of opportunity for all and foster good relations in the course of developing policies and delivery services under the public sector Equality Duty and Equality 2010.*

**Virtual Meeting Access:**

Please follow the joining instructions below for the virtual Zoom meeting

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81424345769?pwd=UTA2QlhxTDg3WlhsTlE5MUI2YlRnUT09>

**Meeting ID:** 814 2434 5769      **Passcode:** 951891

**Participants will be directly let in the meeting by clicking on the above link. There is no waiting room**

**AGENDA**

**1. Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declarations of Interest in respect of items on this agenda as required by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

*Members are reminded that, in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registrable interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. Members may however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared on the Register, as well as any other registrable or other interests.*

**3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)**

**Email:** [towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@melksham-tc.gov.uk) **Web:** [www.melksham-tc.gov.uk](http://www.melksham-tc.gov.uk)  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/melksham.town](https://facebook.com/melksham.town)

To approve the Minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on 30 August 2022.

#### 4. Planning Considerations

Members to note that when responding to planning applications consideration should be given to the Melksham Joint Neighbourhood Plan, the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

#### 5. Planning Applications

To comment on the following planning applications:

**Extension to Consultation Deadlines for the following applications have been requested where required:**

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/05692</u></a> | 32 HIGH STREET, MELKSHAM, SN12 6LD<br>Prior Notification under Class G for the proposed change of use of the building (previously a bank) to a professional artist's workshop (ground floor) and a one-bedroom apartment (first floor). This will be a mixed use live/work development.<br><b>Consultation Deadline: 23/09/2022</b> |
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/06527</u></a> | 64 KENILWORTH GARDENS, MELKSHAM, SN12 6AP<br>Proposed single storey front and rear extensions plus a two storey side extension to a dwelling<br><b>Consultation Deadline: 28/09/2022</b>  |
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/06704</u></a> | 42 BARNWELL ROAD, MELKSHAM, SN12 7DG<br>Proposed single storey rear extension.<br><b>Consultation Deadline: 28/09/2022</b>  |
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/06333</u></a> | 15-17 CHURCH STREET, MELKSHAM, SN12 6ES<br>Modification of rear louvre grille to allow for a new extraction system for (pizza oven business) – part retrospective.<br><b>Consultation Deadline: 30/09/2022</b>  |
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/06444</u></a> | 39 LOWBOURNE, MELKSHAM, SN12 7ED<br>Proposed external staircase to separate existing flat above the Osteopathy Clinic and removal of internal stairs.<br><b>Consultation Deadline: 30/09/2022</b>   |
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/06706</u></a> | 25 TRENT CRESCENT, MELKSHAM, SN12 8BG<br>Proposed single storey rear extension.<br><b>Consultation Deadline: 03/10/2022</b>   |
| <a href="#"><u>PL/2022/06033</u></a> | 30 BANK STREET, MELKSHAM, SN12 6LX  |

Two storey rear extension with internal alterations.

**Consultation Deadline: 04/10/2022**

[PL/2022/06879](#)

CASA LONGA, WATSONS COURT, MELKSHAM, SN12 7JX

Proposed single storey rear extension.

**Consultation Deadline: 05/10/2022**

[PL/2022/06749](#)

14 SHERWOOD AVENUE, MELKSHAM, SN12 7HJ

Proposed detached 2-bedroom bungalow.

**Consultation Deadline: 11/10/2022**

[PL/2022/07063](#)

5 ASH GROVE, MELKSHAM, SN12 6HZ

Single storey side extension.

**Consultation Deadline: 18/10/2022**

[PL/2022/07225](#)

16 ST MARGARETS GARDENS, MELKSHAM, SN12 7BT

Single storey rear extension.

**Consultation Deadline: 19/10/2022**

[PL/2022/06967](#)

Works to a Listed Building

4 UNION STREET, MELKSHAM, SN12 7PR

Proposed external and internal renovations of the dwelling, including replacement of existing single glazed sash windows to front with slim line double glazed sash windows. Existing roof to be renewed and end gable wall replaced.

**Consultation Deadline: 21/10/2022**

[PL/2022/07265](#)

14 CORFE ROAD MELKSHAM SN12 6BQ

Proposed external material change to use render to the extension granted under planning reference PL/2021/10296 and also the rear of the property.

**Consultation Deadline: 26/10/2022**

[PL/2022/06565](#)

2 LONGFORD ROAD, MELKSHAM, SN12 6DH

Proposed timber summerhouse in garden area of property.

**Consultation Deadline: 27/10/2022**

[PL/2022/06221](#)

LAND AT UPSIDE, MELKSHAM, SN12 6DH

Demolition of existing buildings and structures, retention of alloy repair centre and development of 112 dwellings, 675 sqm of flexible employment/commercial space (Use class E(g)ii, iii/B2/B8), formation of public open space, foot and cycle links and associated works.

**Consultation Deadline: 28/10/2022**

To Note:

[PL/2022/05829](#)

MELKSHAM COMMUNITY CAMPUS, MARKET PLACE, SN12 6ES  
Non-Material Amendment to PL/2021/10087 – adjustment to proposed fence line north of the pond; relocation of proposed 2no. trees from west of the pond to west of the library; minor adjustment to the relocation of the northern listed stone gate pier from previously approved relocation.

**Consultation Deadline: Not Listed as this is a non-material amendment.**

[PL/2022/03689](#)

14 CORFE ROAD MELKSHAM SN12 6BQ  
Lawful Development Certificate

At the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on 11 July 2022 the Committee considered the above and resolved to ask Wiltshire Council to notify the Town Council of future lawful development certificate applications to ensure greater transparency.

The Wiltshire Council response was as follows:

*“As this type of application is solely to assess if a proposal is considered permitted development (permitted without the need for formal planning permission) we do not send out any consultations. The proposal would be considered permitted development or not permitted development under The General Permitted Development Order”.*

## 6. Planning Decisions

To note the following planning decisions:

[PL/2022/04969](#)

8-12 LOWBOURNE ROAD, MELKSHAM, WILTSHIRE SN12 7DZ  
Change of use from E Class retail (ground-floor) and C3 residential (first and second-floors) to C3 residential (5 no. apartments) and proposed alterations and extension required to facilitate the change of use.

**Decision:** Approve with Conditions

**MTC Response:** Object due to overdevelopment of site and lack of car parking spaces

[PL/2022/03573](#)

8 CORONATION ROAD, MELKSHAM, WILTSHIRE SN12 7PE  
Certificate of lawfulness for conversion of an existing uninhabitable loft space into a habitable bedroom via a ‘velux’ type loft conversion plus the addition of a car port to the side of the property

**Decision:** Approve  
**MTC Response:** Not required.

[PL/2022/05376](#) 37 SARUM AVENUE, MELKSHAM, WILTSHIRE SN12 6BN  
Single storey rear flat roof extension & single storey front lounge & porch extension  
**Decision:** Approve with Conditions  
**MTC Response:** No Objection

[PL/2022/05005](#) UNIT 1, CHALLEYMEAD BUSINESS PARK, BRADFORD ROAD, MELKSHAM, SN12 8BU  
Insertion of rollers shutter in elevation.  
**Decision:** Approve with Conditions  
**MTC Response:** No Objection

[PL/2022/05081](#) 14 CORFE ROAD, MELKSHAM, SN12 6BQ  
Change of material from brick to render for both the existing dwelling and extension as granted under planning reference: PL/2021/10296.  
**Decision:** Refuse (see Refusal Reasons below)  
*"The proposed render is not considered to be of similar appearance to that used in the construction of the existing dwelling house. As such the proposed alterations to the existing building would fail to comply with Schedule 2, Part 1, condition A.3 (a) of the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended), and therefore planning permission would be required for the development as proposed."*  
**MTC Response:** Objection due to the proposed render not being in keeping with other houses within the street.

[PL/2022/05097](#) 1 THORNBANK, MELKSHAM SN12 6JQ  
Removal or Variation of a Condition  
Variation of condition 2 of PL/2021/08810 - Proposed increase in area of grass removed to allow for 6 no parking spaces rather than 3 no parking spaces and to show use of porous tarmac to improve drainage.  
**Decision:** Approve with Conditions  
**MTC Response:** No Objection

[PL/2022/05597](#) Advertisement Consent – UNIT 2, CHALLEYMEAD BUSINESS PARK, BRADFORD ROAD, MELKSHAM SN12 8BU  
High level signs to front, rear and both side elevations.  
**Decision:** Approve with Conditions  
**MTC Response:** No Objection

[PL/2022/05564](#)

34 GOLDFINCH ROAD, MELKSHAM, SN12 7FL  
Garage conversion with 2no Velux roof lights and new bi-fold doors.

**Decision:** Approve with Conditions

**MTC Response:** No Objection

[PL/2022/06110](#)

22 SHURNHOLD, MELKSHAM, SN12 8DG  
Extension to the rear of the existing garage to create an annex.  
New extension to the front of the main house with storm porch.  
Internal alterations.

**Decision:** Approve with Conditions

**MTC Response:** No Objection

[PL/2022/00125](#)

KING STREET, MELKSHAM, SN12 6HE  
Proposed 3 No. new terraced dwellings (Revised Plans).

**Decision:** Refuse

**MTC Response: Object.**

In January 2022 Melksham Town Council supported the application subject to the following proposed conditions in line with the policies of the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan as follows:

- *Policy 4 – Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Charging -the developer to be encouraged to provide electric vehicle charging points.*
- *Policy 2 – Local Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation - the developer to be encouraged to install solar panels.*
- *Policy 14 – Open Spaces – the developer to be encouraged to provide a planting scheme in the shared open space to contribute to community well-being.*

From the revised plans submitted none of these conditions have been addressed. The Council also has the following objections to the revised plans:

- 1. The only point of access to the site is through King Street car park.*
- 2. Overdevelopment - the site is unsuitable for the development proposed in that location.*
- 3. There is no vehicular parking which is in contravention of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. The Wiltshire Council car parking standard requires two parking spaces per two bed house*
- 4. The previous issues with drainage have not been addressed in the revised plans.*

## **7. Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group LHFIG**

### **7.1 Update on Submissions to LHFIG (Pages 7 - 16)**

To receive the following reports attached:

- Briefing for the Economic Development and Planning Committee – Local Highways and Footway Improvements Group and proposed Snarlton Lane Signs.

**7.2 Highways Improvement Request Form - Crossing of Snarlton Lane from Nightingale Close (Pages 17 - 18)**

To consider the attached request received for the installation of a different coloured road surface for the Snarlton Lane crossing. (see attached).

**8. Neighbourhood Plan (Pages 19 - 42)**

To receive the draft notes of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 29 June 2022, the update for the Area Board meeting held on 21 September 2022 and the Heritage Group update report from Councillor Ellis (see attached).

Members are requested to consider the amendments to the Terms of Reference as proposed in Minute Item No. 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2022 (see below), and recommend them to Full Council for approval

***“Resolved:** For both councils to approve amendments to the Terms of Reference as follows: Point 7:4 to read as follows:*

*If a Steering Group Member is a member of more than one organisation, they should declare their wider interest (removing the reference to “dual hatted” members).*

*Point 10.1: The Steering Group will meet as required rather than monthly.*

*Point 10.2: Meetings will convene no earlier than 6.00pm and no later than 7.30pm and last for 2 hours.”*

**9. Wiltshire Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans**

To consider and formulate a Town Council response to the Wiltshire Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and the Melksham Sign Placement Plan. (see link below).

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/transport-town-cycle-networks>

Members to note the deadline for comments is 26 September 2022. An extension to the deadline for comments has been agreed.

**10. Opportunity for Hydroelectric Generation from the Existing River Avon Weir (Pages 43 - 44)**

To receive a report from Councillor Goodhind regarding an opportunity to use the River Avon weir to generate hydroelectricity, and to consider the next steps to move the

project forward. (see attached).

**11. Sparkle Team and Parish Steward**

To consider jobs to be undertaken by the Sparkle Team and Parish Steward.

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## Melksham Town Council

### Minutes of the Economic Development and Planning Committee meeting held on Tuesday 30th August 2022

**PRESENT:** Councillor G Ellis (Chair)  
Councillor P Aves  
Councillor S Crundell  
Councillor S Rabey

**OFFICERS:** Patsy Clover Deputy Town Clerk  
Christine Hunter Committee Clerk

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** No members of the public or press were present.

**285/22 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Cooke and Goodhind.

**286/22 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**287/22 Minutes**

It was proposed by Councillor Aves, seconded by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the minutes of 8 August 2022 having previously been circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, Councillor Ellis.

**288/22 Planning Applications**

The Council had **no objection** to the following planning applications:

[PL/2022/06253](#)

57 ADDISON ROAD, MELKSHAM SN12 8DR

Single storey rear extension to provide a family room/kitchen, utility & garage for a trike motorcycle.

**Consultation deadline:** 14/09/2022

It was proposed by Councillor Aves, seconded by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application

[PL/2022/06070](#)

SOUTHERN ELECTRICITY, 61 SPA ROAD, MELKSHAM SN12 7NU

The installation of an Electric Vehicle Charging Hub with associated infrastructure, boundary fencing, lighting and CCTV,

signage and an extension of existing railings at 61 Spa Road, Melksham.

**Consultation deadline:** 16/09/2022

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application to include the comments that the Town Council would like to have seen additional charging points to the one proposed, and to suggest that the effect of the proposed lighting on nearby residential properties should be considered.

[PL/2022/06110](#)

22 SHURNHOLD, MELKSHAM SN12 8DG

Extension to the rear of the existing garage to create an annex. New extension to the front of the main house with storm porch. Internal alterations.

**Consultation deadline:** 16/09/2022

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Aves and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application

LEEKES, BEANACRE ROAD, MELKSHAM SN12 8AG

Application for coffee shop with drive-thru facility with associated car parking and landscaping within the car park of Leekes, Melksham.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Rabey and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application with the recommendation that due to the heavy traffic flow on the A350, the current inadequate car park layout be revised to allow better flow of traffic for the whole of the parking area.

## **289/22 Planning Decisions**

The following planning decisions were noted:

[PL/2022/04904](#)

PROPOSED WORKS TO TREES IN A CONSERVATION AREA

3A OAK HATCH PLACE ROAD, MELKSHAM SN12 6JN

T1 – Section fell Magnolia tree to aid nearby shrubs and reduce risk to wall.

**Decision:** No Objection

**MTC Response: Objection to felling the tree but recommended it could be crown lifted after bird nesting time.**

[PL/2022/04946](#)

15 QUEENSWAY, MELKSHAM SN12 7JZ

Single storey front extension.

**Decision:** No Objection

**MTC Response:** No Objection

**290/22 New Premises Licence Application**

The New Premises Licence application for The Good Loaf Café, 13 Avonside Enterprise Park, Melksham SN12 8BT was received.

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by Councillor Aves and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to support the application

**291/22 Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) Issues**

**292/22 LHFIG Membership**

It was proposed by Councillor Ellis, seconded by Councillor Rabey and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to include the election of a representative and substitute representative to the Local Highways and Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG), on the agenda for the Full Council meeting scheduled for 26 September 2022.

**293/22 LHFIG Notes of Meeting 4 August 2022**

The notes of the LHFIG meeting held on 4 August 2022 were received.

The Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, asked for confirmation from the Town Clerk with the that there were sufficient funds in the LHFIG budget to proceed with the agreed works for lighting on St Michael's/Hazelwood Roads (£2,000) and Sandridge Road footway works (£10,000).

**294/22 Delegated Decision - Off Street Parking Traffic Regulation Orders for Wiltshire**

The approval of the County of Wiltshire (Western Wiltshire) (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2022 was noted.

It was proposed by Councillor Ellis, seconded by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to ask the Deputy Town Clerk to remind town residents and businesses of Melksham Town Council's 2-hour parking redemption scheme and to remind Wiltshire Council of their obligations, under the Equality Act 2010, to make

reasonable adjustment by providing parking ticket machines that could be used by disabled people.

**295/22     Sealed Traffic Regulation Order - Off Street Parking Orders 2022**

The Wiltshire Council Traffic Order Regulation notification of parking charges was noted.

It was proposed by Councillor Rabey, seconded by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to ask the Deputy Town Clerk to write to Wiltshire Council to:

- express disappointment that the Traffic Order would come into place without indication of their assurance that no charges would be enforced unless parking was being abused by non-users of the Campus, and
- ask for evidence of work undertaken so far to provide validation of abuse of car parking at the Campus.

**296/22     Leasing Disabled Car Parking Spaces from Wiltshire Council**

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Rabey and

**UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the agenda item regarding the leasing of disabled car parking spaces from Wiltshire Council be forwarded for consideration at the Full Council meeting scheduled for 26 September 2022.

**297/22     Sparkle Team and Parish Steward**

Councillor Rabey asked whether a tree overhanging the public footpath at 11 Canon Square could be trimmed to ensure the safety of residents. Councillor Ellis replied he was in contact with the owners and would ask for permission to trim the tree.

Councillor Rabey confirmed that she was in ongoing correspondence with Sainsburys asking them to clear paths of weeds near the river, empty overflowing bins and remove a fallen tree.

The Committee Clerk agreed to confirm with the Town Mayor, Councillor S Crundell, when the request for works on the A350 Roundabout had been sent to the Sparkle Team/Parish Steward.

Meeting Closed at: 8.02 pm

Signed: .....

Dated:



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The following Policy was agreed by the Area Board:

- a) Each agenda item should be discussed and ratified by the relevant Full Council of each Town and Parish Council unless an alternative process is agreed and accepted by the LHFIG.
- b) Attendance at LHFIG should be by an authorised representative who is fully briefed, has visited the site and is authorised to act on behalf of the Council.
- c) Each Council should be committed to part-fund each project: financial contributions will normally be expected at a rate of 50% for the larger Councils (Melksham Town and Melksham Without) and 25% for the other smaller Councils.
- d) The Chairman of the LHFIG reserves the right to withdraw consideration of any agenda item not meeting these requirements.

N.B. Guidance on typical costs can be found on the Wiltshire Council Website (see Highways page). All items costing £500 or less will be funded in full by the LHFIG budget.

The Town Council has a budget of £7,500 for LHFIG issues. Members are being requested to approve expenditure in the issues below to the value of £3,725.00.

## List of Current Priorities and Issues which the town council have forwarded to LHFIG

Page 8

<p>Issue 9-20-9 – Melksham Sandridge Road – request to improve footway link to Maple Close</p>	<p>Town Council and Highways representatives have met with the land owner to agree in principle the area of land to be dedicated. This would result in a 2 metre wide path parallel to the A3102, and a wider area where the path turns through 90 degrees towards Maple Close. A new boundary wall is to be constructed as part of this agreement.</p> <p>The estimated combined cost, inclusive of Wiltshire Council's legal fees is in the region of £20,000. This figure includes for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• removal of the existing fence, hedgerow and roots.</li> <li>• Provision of footings for wall and edging for new path and to provide temporary fencing.</li> <li>• Completion of footway work following construction of the wall.</li> </ul> <p>The landowner's legal costs are to be met by the Town Council in full.</p> <p>A site meeting has been held to agree the extent of the work with the property owner. The legal process for the land dedication can now commence.</p>
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### 1. For members information re progress.

<p>Active Travel Scheme - Farmers Roundabout – signing to promote use of shared use cycle route to and from Holt Road and town bridge.</p>	<p>Scheme to be funded from a third tranche of Section 106 money from the George Ward Gardens development.</p> <p>Signing work has been completed.</p> <p>There are funds remaining specifically to improve cycleway signing within the town.</p>	<p>Highways request that the Town Council consider where additional improvements could be made.</p>
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### 2. Members are requested to consider cycleways that would benefit from improved signage. The LHFIG has a budget of £10,000

Melksham Dunch Lane – funded by Section 106 monies from George Ward Gardens development	Consultation on full closure over rail bridge or one way operation from east to west and new parking controls to be carried out by the Town Council.	
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3. The Town Council are expected to carry out the consultation exercise with local residents. There is no funding available for the consultation exercise. However, there are funds to invoke any changes to the traffic management in Dunch Lane which are deemed appropriate. A consultation was carried out in 2017 and the results indicated that a one way should be implemented east to west. This needs to be communicated to residents.

Active Travel Scheme - Melksham Town Bridge – drop kerbs and signs.	Preliminary design work now completed, see drawings included (Appendix 3A and 3B). Preliminary costs, including legal fees for road closure and a 20% contingency fee are estimated in the region of £14,000.	Defer to next meeting with MTC present
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4. This was an issue during the first Covid lockdown making social distancing difficult for pedestrians crossing the bridge. It is no longer an issue and members are requested to decide whether to remove this from the list of issues currently with LHFIFG.

Issue 9-22-1 – Melksham Footway linking Hazelwood Road & St Michaels Road – Request for lighting	<p>Issue submitted by Cllr Hubbard and Melksham Town Council.</p> <p>The location of a live feed is unclear (from existing records) and therefore it is difficult to give a robust estimate. Our consultants suggest a sum of £4,000 should cover the installation of 1 lighting column, located approximately at the mid point of the footway link.</p> <p>Highways awaiting confirmation from the Town Council of their 50% contribution.</p>	Defer to next meeting with MTC present
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5. The Committee are requested to approve 50% of the funding, £2000.00 towards this priority to be met from the budget which has a balance to-date of £7,500.

6.

Issue 9-22-4 – Melksham Westbury View – request for Access Protection Marking	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>At the last meeting, the group agreed to the provision of an access protection marking outside No 34.</p> <p>Work has been delayed due to unforeseen staff absence. Now likely to be done late August / early September.</p>	Area Board to note
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7. This work has been delayed further but will take place shortly.

Issue 9-22-5 – Melksham Spa Road – safety concerns at access to & from Wharf Court	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>Request for concealed access signs or similar. Highways advise that Concealed Entrance signs are not permitted on the Highway.</p> <p>Highways have been unable to identify a prescribed sign for this situation. Both Wharf Court and Meadowsweet Place are private accesses and visibility from these accesses satisfied the planning requirements.</p> <p>Highways suggest the placement of additional SLOW road markings which can be provided for less than £500.</p>	<p>LHFIG recommends to the Area Board that £500 is allocated to this project.</p> <p>Highways to action.</p>
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8. This work will be carried out by Wiltshire Council Highways, no contribution from the Town Council is required.

Issue 9-20-3 - A350 Western Way – Pedestrian safety at signal controlled crossing on dual carriageway section.	<p>Work to upgrade the Crossing facility has now been completed.</p> <p>The Active Travel Scheme (as a whole) will be subject to a full road safety audit upon completion of some snagging items.</p>	<p>LHFIG recommends to the Area Board that this item is closed.</p>
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9. No action from Town Council required.

Issue 9-22-2 – Melksham Union Street – Request for 20 mph speed limit assessment	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>Results from a Speed Detector Radar survey show an Average Speed of 23 mph and 85<sup>th</sup> Percentile at 27mph. 7.1% of vehicles recorded were travelling in excess of 30 mph.</p> <p>Cost of 20 mph assessment is £2,500; agreed to combine with another road assessment to provide best value.</p>	LHFIG recommends to the Area Board that this item is closed until a new proposal is received.
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10. No suitable locations have come forward to carry out a 20mph assessment. LHFIG have now closed this issue until a new proposal is put forward. One solution which was discussed was the possibility of traffic controls at the junction with Lowbourne which would be programmed to slow traffic's egress from Union Street and hopefully deter drivers from using it as a rat run. However, this is an extremely costly solution.

Issue 9-22-3 – Melksham The Crays – request for drop kerbs	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>Drop kerbs to facilitate access for wheelchair users at the junction of The Crays and Montague Place. A Ball Park cost for this project is between £2,000 and £2,500.</p> <p>Highways met with Town Council Officer on site and can see no reason why this could not be taken forward.</p>	Defer to next meeting with MTC present
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11. Members are requested to approve 50% of the funding for this scheme up to a maximum of £1,250.00.

Issue 9-22-6 – Melksham Sandridge Road junction with Snarlton Lane – request for signs to direct drivers to Snarlton Farm	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>Issue concerns HGV deliveries attempting to access the Farm via Snarlton Lane. Highways have considered direction signs to deter this and a proposal is included as Appendix 6.</p> <p>A ball park estimate to undertake this work is £950, inclusive of temporary traffic management.</p>	Defer to next meeting with MTC present
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12. Members are requested to approve this work and to contribute 50% of the cost, £475.00. Proposed Signage attached.

Issue 9-22-7 – Melksham – Eastern Way / Snowberry Lane – request for weight limit and 30 mph speed limit	<p>Issue submitted by Cllr Sankey and Melksham Town Council</p> <p>Changes requested on roads soon to be by-passed by new route via Camomile Place.</p> <p>Wiltshire currently has no Freight Management Policy and therefore Weight Limits cannot be considered at this time. With no fundamental changes taking place along the old route, a request for a 30mph limit is unlikely to meet the criteria.</p> <p>Advice from Highways Engineer is to monitor the situation once the new link road has been opened. Through traffic should naturally migrate to this new link road as it will form a more direct route</p>	LHFIG recommends to the Area Board that this item is closed.
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13. This item is for information. The issue has been closed.

Issue 9-22-14 – Melksham Queensway – request for access protection marking	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>No 2 has planning permission to install drop kerbs for new driveway, which is to be accessed from a lay-by.</p> <p>Highways are content in principle for an access protection marking to be painted but cannot confirm this until the new access has been constructed. Work on the access has yet to commence.</p>	LHFIG recommends to the Area Board that this item is closed.
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14. This item is for information the issue has been closed.

Issue 9-22-15 – Melksham junction of Church Street and High Street and Lowbourn – request for audible warning at signal controlled crossing points	<p>Issue submitted by Melksham Town Council</p> <p>Audible warning at Church Street signals de-activated and set at low level at crossing point by the Library.</p> <p>Highways have commissioned Atkins Signal consultants to investigate and report back.</p>	Defer to next meeting with MTC present
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15. Response from Highways Engineer attached. Members to decide whether to pursue the request in light of the report.

Proposed signs to manage deliveries to Snarlton Farm

Sign 1 – adjacent to junction with Snarlton Lane

Dimensions 1276 x 925mm



Sign 2 – Below advance direction sign to Eastern Way Roundabout

Dimensions 1604 x 431mm



Sign 3 – Below direction sign on Eastern Way Roundabout

Dimensions 1464 x 431mm



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# Agenda Item 7.2

## Highways Improvement Request Form

### Contact Details

<b>Name:</b>	Mike Sankey	<b>Date:</b>	03/05/2022
<b>Address:</b>	1 Gregor Drive Calne SN11 8HT		
<b>Telephone No:</b>	07842 969069		
<b>Email Address:</b>	Sankey68@btinternet.com		

### Issue Details

<b>Location of Issue:</b>	Snarlton lane
<b>Community Area:</b>	Melksham
<b>Parish or Town Council:</b>	Melksham
<b>Nature of Issue:</b>	
<p>Crossing of Snarlton lane from Nightingale close.  View of crossing by oncoming traffic is restricted often by vegetation and despite warning signs, crossing is not obvious with potential for pedestrians to come into conflict with oncoming traffic.</p>	
<b>How long has it been an issue?</b>	On going but higher risk with extension to local school approved
<b>What would you like done to resolve this issue?</b>	
<p>Mark Stansby has indicated that a different coloured road surface could be installed to make the crossing more obvious at a total cost of 2.5k</p>	
<b>Have you been in touch with your local Wiltshire Councillor? (Yes/No)</b>	Yes

***This form needs to be completed and e-mailed or sent to your local Town or Parish Council.***

***Town and Parish contact details are available via the link below:***

<https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx>

<b>Town or Parish Council Comments:</b> (To be completed by Town or Parish Council only)

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## Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

### Steering Group Meeting

Date: Wednesday 29 June 2022

Start: 6.30 pm

#### Present:

##### Steering Group Members Present

Councillor David Pafford (MWPC)  
Councillor Richard Wood (MWPC Sub)  
Councillor Jon Hubbard (MTC)  
Councillor Gary Cooke (MTC Sub)  
John Hamley (MTUG)

##### Officers

Teresa Strange (MWPC)  
Lorraine McRandle (MWPC)  
Linda Roberts (MTC)  
David Way (WC)

#### Task Group Members:

Councillor Baines (MWPC)  
Councillor Mark Harris (MPWC)  
Graham Ellis (MTC)

#### Planning Consultants:

Vaughan Thompson (Place Studio)

#### Via Zoom:

Shirley McCarthy (Environment)

<b>MTC</b>	<b>Melksham Town Council</b>
<b>MWPC</b>	<b>Melksham Without Parish Council</b>
<b>WC</b>	<b>Wiltshire Council</b>
<b>MTUG</b>	<b>Melksham Transport User Group</b>

## MINUTES

### 1. Welcome & Housekeeping

Until a new Chair was voted in, Councillor Wood, as the current Chair (albeit a substitute for the meeting) took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The MWPC Clerk pointed out the various fire escapes.

(NB: Shirley had joined the meeting via Zoom. Unfortunately, due to various technical issues, Shirley was only able to listen to the meeting and not take part in discussions)

## **2. To note new representatives from Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council**

The meeting was informed that the following Neighbourhood Plan representatives were appointed at the Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council's respective Annual Council meetings held in May.

Councillor Jon Hubbard:	Melksham Town Council
Councillor Pat Aves:	Melksham Town Council
Councillor John Glover:	Melksham Without Parish Council
Councillor David Pafford:	Melksham Without Parish Council

## **3. To note apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor John Glover (MWPC) who was unfortunately having to attend a funeral and therefore Councillor Richard Wood was substituting. Apologies had also been received from Councillor Aves (MTC) who was attending another meeting with Councillor Gary Cooke substituting.

Apologies had also been received from Chris Holden who was unwell and Colin Harrison who was on holiday.

The MWPC Clerk informed the meeting that no apologies had been received from Wiltshire Councillor Mike Sankey (representative for the Area Board).

Members of the various task groups had been invited to attend the meeting; therefore, the following were in attendance and introduced themselves:

### **Task Group(s)**

Councillor Alan Baines (MWPC)	Housing, Bypass
Councillor Mark Harris (MWPC)	Housing, Bypass & Canal
Councillor Graham Ellis (MTC)	Heritage, Bypass

## **4. To elect new Chair & Vice Chair of Steering Group**

Councillor Wood explained that he had stepped down as being a representative of the parish council for the Steering Group and was only in attendance at this meeting as a substitute. He was the outgoing Chair of the Steering Group and had been on the Steering Group, and its Chair, since the beginning of the process, for a number of years. In line with the Terms of Reference, the Chair of the Steering Group was elected every June, and therefore sought nominations for the Chair.

Councillor Baines proposed Councillor David Pafford as Chair.

The MWPC Clerk explained only Steering Group members were able to vote and nominate at present, as per the Terms of Reference, however, these were due to be reviewed later in the meeting.

Therefore, Councillor Wood nominated Councillor Pafford as Chair and sought a seconder.

Councillor Hubbard expressed concern that there was a perception that the parish council were leading the Neighbourhood Plan process. He noted that in the past that the Town Council had not been as engaged in the process as they could have been and therefore wondered if a Chair from the Town Council should be sought in order that residents would feel the Town Council were more involved.

Councillor Hubbard stated that he understood originally that there was supposed to be a rotating Chair from the respective councils each year which had not been the case, and whilst appreciating the involvement of Councillor Wood as Chair in the Neighbourhood Plan process to date, realised it was the Steering Group's decision.

The MWPC Clerk clarified that there was no rule regarding a rotating Chair between both Councils (as per the Terms of Reference, which had been agreed by both councils) and that the position of Chair had come up every year for the past 8-9 years and during this time Councillor Wood has been the only person to be nominated Chair with no other nominations coming forward from the group, including from the Melksham Town Council representatives.

Councillor Wood sought further nominations, with Councillor Jon Hubbard stating as he had raised the issue, he would put himself forward as Chair, noting Councillor Aves as the other Town Council representative was not present.

Unfortunately, there was no seconder for either Councillor Pafford or Councillor Hubbard, and it was agreed to defer appointing a new Chair until the next meeting. Councillor Wood continued chairing the meeting.

## **5. Declarations of Interests & Register of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest, with a reminder for those who had not already done so to complete a Register of Interest Form for interests in the whole of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Forms were handed to Councillors Jon Hubbard and Gary Cooke to complete and return.

## **6. Public Participation**

There were no members of public present.

## **7. To agree Minutes of Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2022.

## **8. To review Terms of Reference**

The MWPC Clerk explained the Terms of Reference had been reviewed by the Steering Group in early 2021 and agreed by both councils as qualifying bodies, however there had been a recent question from the Town Council regarding point 7.4 regarding “dual hatted” councillors as they felt this prevented Town Councillors, who were also Wiltshire Councillors, being Steering Group members.

*7.4 If a Steering Group Member is a member of more than one organisation, they should declare their wider interest. Members must not be ‘dual hatted’, for example, they cannot be a town, parish or Wiltshire Councillor if representing a community group.*

The MWPC Clerk explained that this rule had been applied when a representative was recently sought from MTUG (Melksham Transport User Group) as Graham Ellis had been nominated but was not eligible under the Terms of Reference as a Melksham Town Councillor.

The MWPC Clerk also explained the Steering Group had previously consisted of Leads of the various task groups, with voting rights, during the drafting stage of NHP#1 and asked if the Steering Group wished the current Leads on the various task groups to join the Steering Group as previously, with voting rights.

Councillor Pafford proposed the Leads from each task group join the Steering Group as voting members, as this gave the group a broad spectrum of people on the group and hopefully more people attending meetings.

Councillor Hubbard expressed concern at widening the group to include the Leads from the various Task Groups, as some may be town or parish councillors and stated the Steering Group needed to consider if a Town Council representative who was also a Wiltshire Councillor was eligible to join the Steering Group under the current Terms of Reference, and expressed frustration at the current rules.

Councillor Pafford at this stage withdrew his proposal that Leads from the task groups join the Steering Group.

Councillor Wood felt if a Councillor was also a Wiltshire Councillor or a member of an organisation, they could be on the Steering Group but would only get one vote.

Councillor Pafford noted other minor amendments needed to be made to the Terms of Reference with regard to the Core Strategy and timings of meetings to reflect current practice.

**Resolved:** For both councils to approve amendments to the Terms of Reference as follows:

Point 7:4 to read as follows:

If a Steering Group Member is a member of more than one organisation, they should declare their wider interest (*removing the reference to “dual hatted” members*)

Point 10.1: The Steering Group will meet as required *rather than monthly*.

Point 10.2: Meetings will convene no earlier than 6.00pm and no later than 7.30pm and last for 2 hours.

Reference to the Core Strategy throughout the document to be amended to the Local Plan where appropriate.

## **9. To receive update on Task Group work to date, progress with Locality Technical Support packages and agree next steps**

Vaughan updated the Steering Group on the recent work undertaken by the various task groups.

### **a) Housing**

#### **i. Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Needs Local Survey**

A draft Housing Needs Assessment has been provided by AECOM via Technical Support and a local Housing Needs Survey has also been undertaken and the results collated which will provide a data approach specific to the neighbourhood plan area. Some aspects had been broken down where possible into the settlements of Melksham & Bowerhill, Shaw & Whitley and the wider rural area to align with the Core Strategy and Local Plan Review settlements.

The next steps for the group will be to review AECOM's work and completion of the survey work, which will provide the material to produce potentially a new housing policy to meet local housing needs. This will require developers to demonstrate how they considered the local type and tenure requirements in their proposals to meet the specific needs of the community. It can also influence housing allocations to ensure they respond to the community's housing needs.

## **ii. Site Assessment**

The housing allocation/call for sites work is currently underway. Vaughan thanked both the Clerk to Melksham Without and David Way who had pulled together a long list of sites (currently circa 90 sites) which would need to be assessed for their suitability and sustainability. These sites will feed into an assessment process by AECOM via Technical Support and will take 12-16 weeks to complete. The next steps will be for the Steering Group to select the preferred sites later in the Autumn.

Vaughan explained this process will take some time to complete and extend into the Autumn, when it was hoped that the Local Plan would be available, in order to see what Wiltshire Council were proposing in terms of housing numbers and locational strategy. The choice of sites and number of houses for the NHP#2 to allocate can be informed by the Local Plan, with a meaningful amount required to ensure that NHP#2 sustains and refreshes its NPPF Paragraph 14 protection.<sup>1</sup>

Vaughan explained Berryfield appeared to have been enveloped in the urban area in AECOM's report and this would be fed back to AECOM with a request it is put back to a small village.

David explained as a small village Berryfield will only take infill development as per the current Wiltshire Council policy.

Councillor Baines highlighted recent revisions of parish boundaries between the town and parish had also not been taken into account in AECOM's report.

### **b) Design Codes (including update on Wiltshire Council Design Code)**

Vaughan explained this policy was going to be strengthened with a character statement and design code for the whole of the neighbourhood plan area. The group had obtained Technical Support to provide design characteristics for the different parts of Melksham and Melksham Without. The work has been approved and will start shortly.

Vaughan sought members from the steering group or task group to assist AECOM with this and suggested sending out an email for volunteers after the

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

meeting. Wiltshire Council will be looking at more strengthened design policies and will be more specific.

The next stage will be to get the design code work from AECOM, review it and approve it.

### **c) Town Centre Master Plan**

Vaughan explained the town centre featured as a Policy and a Priority Statement in the existing Plan, with good progress being made on this work with AECOM.

A meeting had taken place with AECOM and a Town Centre Master Plan brief produced which cut across Priority for People and also looked at connectivity between the rest of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Vaughan explained the plans had to focus on things that can be delivered through planning but could talk about non planning items which are material to the future vitality of the town centre.

The next stage would be to appoint AECOM to do a Town Centre Masterplan via Technical Support.

Councillor Wood asked how this work fitted in with the work the Town Council had already undertaken.

The MTC Clerk clarified the Town Council had agreed the Neighbourhood Plan would do this wider work with any implications to be considered by the town council as they arose.

Councillor Hubbard explained the Masterplan had not come to council as yet, but a proposal regarding Priority for People had been put to the Parish Council.

The MWPC Clerk explained the Priority for People proposal had gone to a recent Full Council meeting and a response would be forwarded to the Town Council in due course. The Parish Council wanted to understand the substance of what the Town Council were trying to achieve and who would be meeting the costs involved in achieving some of the proposals. As an example, easy walking routes to schools was one of the first things on the list but they were aware of the high costs of these highway works, with only short section of footway in the parish recently costed at £100,000.

Councillor Hubbard explained the plan needed to cover the whole community in order to be an effective document which is used, and needed all stakeholders to be involved in order for proposals to be achieved.

Councillor Baines felt Priority for People extends beyond the Neighbourhood Plan area and therefore needed to include those communities as well.

Vaughan clarified the Town Centre Masterplan was not Priority for People, but could provide spatial representation on how things can be, and should be, delivered, such as connecting the town centre to communities.

Vaughan explained the next stage would be to get the Town Centre Masterplan underway as soon as possible, dovetailing design coding and character work with the Town Centre Master Plan in order to get a joined-up approach.

Vaughan explained the Priority Statement for the Town Centre had also been discussed and along with the Policy would need to be updated, particularly as national legislation for Use Classes relating to town centres had been changed since the production of the current Neighbourhood Plan.

Vaughan explained other resources were available which could help with the Town Centre Master Plan, including resources from Wiltshire Council.

#### **d) Local Green Spaces**

Vaughan explained this identified local green spaces which are valuable to the community and qualify for designation as Local Green Space, which gives similar support in planning terms to a piece of land in a green belt.

The task group were currently working through a list of approximately 280 sites which had been identified by the community as important green spaces.

The next step is to review the list to get down to a deliverable short list of sites to be assessed against a strict criteria.

Vaughan explained engagement would also need to take place with the landowners of those sites which are considered suitable for designation as Local Green Spaces, in order for them to consider the appropriateness of this designation and have an opportunity to object to proposals.

Councillor Pafford explained one Neighbourhood Plan elsewhere in the county had identified where they wanted housing, but not where they didn't want housing which then was queried at Appeal, and asked whether this would be the same with green spaces.

Vaughan explained those sites which were eligible and pass the criteria would be okay as they would be protected as designated Local Green Spaces. However, those sites which did not meet the criteria would be vulnerable but

could be identified as spaces of local value and be given material consideration. Therefore, a way of optimising protection for those sites which did not meet the necessary criteria needed to be found.

David Way sought clarification of designation of spaces of local value against an area being designated as a local green space, which in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) would hold more weight.

Vaughan explained the Neighbourhood Plan had policies on green infrastructure and the green environment and therefore there would be an evidence base which would show those areas identified by the community which were of local value, but did not meet the criteria to be designated as a Local Green Space. David explained it would be helpful if sites put forward could be listed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan, as part of the evidence base.

Vaughan explained he had taken on board the comments raised on this issue and would look at ways of including those sites put forward, but not meeting the relevant criteria, in the Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **e) Local Heritage Assets**

Vaughan explained that Local Heritage Assets were for assets that did not meet the criteria to be 'Listed' but were still of value to the local community. A shortlist had been collated of assets put forward by the community and were currently being assessed. Owners would have to be consulted and those meeting the relevant criteria would be part of the evidence base for the heritage policy, this will enable both councils to respond to planning applications by referring to those on the list.

Councillor Wood mentioned Kelly's Lamp on Bowerhill, which was a local asset. Vaughan agreed to check Kelly's Lamp was included on the list of Heritage Assets for consideration.

Graham, as a member of the Heritage Task Working Group, explained only 7 or 8 had been nominated and were being reviewed currently and asked if an asset was of extreme value if it could be considered for being 'Listed'.

In the same vein, the MWPC Clerk stated the Parish Council had previously asked if The Spa could be considered as a Conservation Area but unfortunately there seemed to be no appetite at the time from Wiltshire Council or Historic England and therefore asked if the Neighbourhood Plan could give The Spa more than Listed status.

Vaughan explained there was a separate process through Historic England to list buildings, but would investigate the process, which would be outside the Neighbourhood Plan, but the site could be included as a local heritage asset.

David Way explained that as The Spa buildings were Listed, their setting was of great weight in the planning process.

#### **f) Climate Issues**

Vaughan explained this was about strengthening the existing commitments and actions for sustainable development and climate change responses in the neighbourhood plan. Wiltshire Council had advanced their climate strategy and other Neighbourhood Plans since Melksham's was adopted have pushed the envelope in their responses to climate change and sustainability and it was worth investigating these.

Vaughan explained Katie Lea from Place was assisting on this and had provided a topic paper for the task group to review and look at additional potential policy and evidence, and what pointers to best practice should be referenced in the neighbourhood plan.

#### **g) Implications of Bypass**

Vaughan explained the implications of the bypass had been included as a Priority Statement in the current Neighbourhood Plan. There was a need to get the priority statement factual and to consider how the Neighbourhood Plan represented the communities' views.

The task group had met the project engineer for the scheme in order to understand the latest on the project.

Vaughan explained the next stage would be to craft and refresh the Priority Statement in the Neighbourhood Plan. After this, it would be to agree the level of support which is given in the Neighbourhood Plan to proposals, once more information is released on the project. Trajectory of housing would also be a critical path.

#### **h) Implications of Canal Link**

Vaughan explained the task group were trying to arrange a meeting with the Wilts & Berks Canal representative to get the latest update on the project, to inform the position of the Neighbourhood Plan Priority Statement review.

The current Wiltshire Council Core Strategy protects the route of the proposed canal link; therefore it is not the job of the Steering Group to protect a route.

However, he understood there is a concern regarding proposals for enabling development.

Councillor Hubbard queried whether the group could be confident the new Local Plan would protect the route of the proposed canal.

David Way explained it should do, but could not say for sure and explained that the Wilts & Berks Canal Group had recently produced a vision document with a safeguarded route which still went through Berryfield, behind the New Inn Pub, and followed the same route as previously detailed.

David explained the Local Plan would probably safeguard a Bypass route as well and understood consultation was taking place on a slightly revised route following feedback. He was hopeful that by the time Wiltshire Council went out to Regulation 19 consultation on the Local Plan later in the year, there would be a safeguarded route for the bypass, as with the canal.

David asked when the Steering Group hoped to go out to Regulation 14 in the Autumn and whether this would be prior to the publication of the Local Plan in the Autumn, as there would be quite a few things in the document the Steering Group would need to take into account.

It was agreed the Steering Group aimed to go out to Regulation 14 after the publication of the Local Plan Review, as long as the publication of the Local Plan did not slip several months, given the tight timeframe.

Vaughan explained the site assessment work may not come back until October and then the Steering Group would have to make the choices about the sites and which to include in the Neighbourhood Plan. It would then need complete the SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) and HRA (Habitats Regulations Assessment) on those proposals with the Plan being appropriately amended and refined before going out to Regulation 14 consultation. Vaughan anticipated that the Reg 14 consultation would be ready at Christmas/New Year time and would be informed by reviewing in line with the Local Plan.

Concern was expressed that the group only had 1 year left to get the review done in order to keep the 2 years protection from a lack of 5-year land supply, provided by Paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

Councillor Pafford sought guidance on what stage Wiltshire Council would give weight to the Neighbourhood Plan in determining speculative planning applications.

David clarified that pre-Reg 14 consultation, or even during the consultation, that the Neighbourhood Plan would have little weight; only when the Plan had

been submitted and was going through the Examination process would it have more weight.

Concern was expressed at the delay in the Local Plan and the impact on the Neighbourhood Plan review and the need to keep in step with the Local Plan Review in order to adhere to policies in the Local Plan.

David felt that it was not the intention of the Government for groups to keep updating their Neighbourhood Plans every 2 years to keep Paragraph 14 protection.

Vaughan explained that as the Neighbourhood Plan consultant he would need to make sure the Neighbourhood Plan did not conflict with the emerging Local Plan and therefore was sound when going forward for examination.

**i) Request for screening opinion for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)**

Vaughan explained as the Plan will be allocating a site(s) there will be a requirement for an SEA and HRA.

David had enabled a draft screening opinion on the SEA, with a request being submitted to Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England, requesting comments within 5-6 weeks.

Vaughan explained that an SEA usually happens at the end of the draft Plan process but David had been helpful in providing a draft opinion to allow the application to Locality for Technical Support for AECOM to progress this week. The aim was to drip feed components of the updated policies etc to AECOM to undertake this piece of work during the coming months, whilst waiting for the housing elements to progress and this should speed up the whole process, rather than doing it all at the end and adding delays.

David explained that with regard to the HRA screening a draft plan would be required in order to do this. The first Plan did not need an HRA, which will be undertaken by Wiltshire Council, as the area does not have a lot of European sites or sensitive sites compared to other areas and only allocated a site for 18 houses. It was possible that an HRA would be required for the review Plan however if larger site/s had housing allocations.

**j) Policy Review**

Vaughan explained that following the Appeal hearing for the site to the rear of Townsend Farm, the Planning Inspectorate had noted that there was no specific buffer protection in place in any of the policy frameworks. Therefore, there was an opportunity in the Plan review to consider advancing a new

green buffer/green wedge policy to identify the areas of the rural environment between Melksham and its neighbouring settlements to ensure there is no coalescence or erosion of the green environment, which is part of local distinctiveness.

David agreed this would be a good idea, other Plans had done similar in order to prevent coalescence and would be considered a Landscape Gap policy. Members discussed examples of where the question of areas to be protected had arisen before; such as between Bowerhill and the canal, between Melksham and Beanacre, between Melksham and Shaw & Whitley; between Shaw and Whitley, between Melksham and Bowerhill, and between Melksham and Berryfield.

## **10. To review Programme Dates**

Vaughan explained the group was on programme with all of the topics and explained that the meeting today had been picked as a logical date in the programme as a lot was happening with the evidence gathering exercises, which were coming to an end, or where Technical Support had been granted and various assessments were being undertaken and reports produced.

In the next 3 months the policies would start to be shaped, with the site assessment work running for a bit longer. Therefore, the housing allocation will be later in the programme and there will need to be further discussion with Wiltshire Council regarding the Local Plan to understand housing numbers and strategic sites.

The MWPC Clerk clarified that with regard to the Landscape Gap assessment work that this would be outside the current approved quote from Place; and therefore, required a resolution to take forward a request for additional funding from the parish and town council.

Vaughan explained such a policy would need to be based on a robust landscape assessment which would stand up to challenge by a landscape advocate for a developer. It would need to be defined on robust landscape grounds and assessed by a Chartered Landscape Architect. The work would take approximately 3-4 days' work. If this was based on the standard consultant daily rate of £500 (as this is the maximum rate that Locality accepted for such work, so a good baseline indicative figure) it would cost about £2,000-£3,000; this would provide an effective robust evidence base for a policy; to enable it to stand up against future challenge or scrutiny.

Councillor Pafford proposed this, which was seconded by Councillor Hubbard.

It was noted the costs of undertaking this work would have to be split between both councils, with the MTC Clerk expressing a concern the Town Council had already spent the budget set aside for the Neighbourhood Plan Review.

**Resolved:** To instruct a Chartered Landscape architect to undertake work in order to formulate a landscape gap policy, pending both Council's funding approval.

#### **11. To approve latest invoices and note current financial report.**

An invoice from Place for £5,540.46 (£6,648 including VAT) had been received and related to work undertaken on the Housing site selection and other work and included travel expenses. Apart from the travel expenses the rest of the invoice would come from the £10,000 Locality grant funding.

The MTC Clerk understood further Place invoices had been received earlier in the day, but would investigate.

The MWPC Clerk explained there had been 3 full page adverts in the Melksham News, which the Town Council should have received the invoices, which would come out of grant funding.

Vaughan stated the last invoice took over a month to be paid and as only a small company they were unable to carry such debt and therefore asked if payments could be paid within the 30 days payment period.

The MTC Clerk explained she would investigate why the payment had been late but hoped going forward this would not be the case, as the Town Council now had the capability to pay by BACS.

#### **12. To receive update on Appeal APP/Y3940/W/21/3285428 for 20/07334/OUT - Semington Road, Melksham, SN12 6EF and next steps undertaken**

David explained the approval of the plans was not what everyone had expected, including Wiltshire Council, with the appeal been won, as the developer had changed the allocation from market value housing to 100% affordable housing at Appeal stage. The Inspector had given great weight to the need for affordable housing in Wiltshire and therefore this swayed his opinion.

David explained that when looking at Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which gives areas with a Neighbourhood Plan protection for 2 years from speculative, not Plan led, development, the Inspector had said the Melksham Plan had met all four of the criteria, where there is a newly made neighbourhood plan and the adverse impacts are likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the housing proposal.

David believed the original proposal, which was policy compliant with 30% affordable housing would not have been allowed at Appeal and from reading the Inspector's report did not think he had discussed the adverse impacts of having 50 affordable houses in one place as normally the policy is to spread affordable housing within a development.

Councillor Wood asked what lessons had been learnt from the outcome of the appeal.

David explained Wiltshire Council had refused the application and defended it at the hearing, as best they could. The decision was not based on the lack of 5-year housing supply and only need a 3-year land supply to afford Paragraph 14 protection.

Councillor Wood asked if another application for 50 affordable houses came along elsewhere would this be defensible.

David explained consideration would need to be given to the appeal decision and as a different site they would look at other impacts i.e. landscape, biodiversity etc and refuse on those reasons and defend those reasons at appeal.

Councillor Pafford asked if the developer were to come back with another application for market value housing on all or part of the site due to lack of viability what would be the response of Wiltshire Council.

David explained this could happen, and in all likelihood would be refused as the appeal was won as the application was changed to 100% affordable housing. Most developers would not put in an application for 100% affordable housing as it was not profitable. If a developer came forward with 60% or 70% affordable housing it would likely be refused given the fact the Neighbourhood Plan has recently been made. However, it could be appealed by the developer and Wiltshire Council would have to defend their decision.

David expressed frustration that officers' time was taken up in defending appeals, which are time consuming, as this meant their time was taken away from obtaining a 5-year land supply position.

Vaughan asked if there was any other course of action which could be taken in challenging the Inspector's decision, if considered to be unacceptable.

David explained a judicial review could be requested or Wiltshire Council could challenge the decision made. Wiltshire Council, as the Local Planning Authority, would have to request a judicial review but there are significant cost implications in doing this. It would also be hard for Wiltshire Council to put forward the

argument that Wiltshire does not need affordable housing and whether a Judge would dismiss the Inspector's decision on this.

Councillor Baines expressed concern at having affordable housing in one location.

Councillor Hubbard felt in the end it may have to be accepted that the Appeal was lost, despite an understanding that 100% affordable housing was against planning policy and hoped there would be officer support at Wiltshire Council to reject any subsequent plans which are submitted by the developer for a change in the scheme as the development is no longer viable.

Vaughan expressed concern that the Inspector had not taken account the Core Strategy's balanced community policy in arriving at his view on the balance of the benefits outweighing the harm. He felt it was not about whether the Inspector's view on 'balance' was right when it came to the appeal, but about whether he took account of a policy and whether his decision is sound and compliant.

David explained he had expressed his opinion and that of the Steering Group at a higher level in Wiltshire Council and he had proposed they look into getting legal advice into a legal challenge/judicial review. The 50 affordable houses will be of different tenures, with some social housing as well as First Homes and shared homes.

The MWPC Clerk explained that the Parish Council had written to Parvis Khansari (Wiltshire Council's Corporate Director of Place), to seek assurance of how officers in the future were going to treat any speculative development applications in the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Area, bearing in mind it had met Paragraph 14 conditions, and secondly what would Wiltshire Council do if the applicant were to come back with a revised scheme using the viability argument.

Parvis Khansari had written back to say he had forwarded the Council's concerns to the Head of Planning to investigate.

The MWPC Clerk also explained that the Townsend Farm Residents Association had written to Michael Gove MP as head of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, as well as their local MP, to express frustration at the decision, given all the hard work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Michelle Donelan MP had responded to say she was looking into arranging a meeting with the Housing Minister, to discuss the concerns. The Parish Council had written back to Michelle Donelan MP to say the Council would support such discussions and would like to be part of that meeting.

David explained he hoped the Government would look at this, as most neighbourhood plan groups would wonder whether it was worth continuing.

The MWPC Clerk noted the development did not make any contribution to the canal in the s106 unilateral agreement, which was in the original report as a condition and felt it would be interesting to understand who and why this had been taken out of the new Unilateral Agreement.

Councillor Baines explained the developer had only put forward the first half of their land holding and would probably come back with the other half of the site, which is Grade 2 agricultural land and what the reaction would be from Wiltshire Council as this would be for market value housing presumably to make the whole site viable.

**Resolved:** To write to Parvis Khansari, Corporate Director Place to ask if Wiltshire Council are happy that the Planning Inspector took heed of the Wiltshire Council policies regarding balanced and inclusive communities on this Appeal decision, and if the impact of 50 affordable housing dwellings in one place was considered appropriately.

### **13. Latest WALPA (Wiltshire Area Localism Planning Alliance) update**

The Steering Group noted the various reports and update from WALPA.

### **14. To agree date and venue of Next Meeting of Steering Group**

Vaughan suggested as there was plenty of work for the various task groups to undertake that the next Steering Group meeting be held at the end of September in order the evidence collated could be presented.

**Resolved:** The next Steering Group meeting to be held on 28 September at 6.30pm (Venue TBC)

Meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed .....  
Chair, 28 September 2022

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# Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Update for the Area Board Meeting: Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022

To provide update further to local consultations and evidence gathering exercises that have taken place over the summer months as part of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan review.

## Housing: Assessment and Information to inform approach to housing (together with the Local Plan)

The steering group undertook a Call for Sites exercise in the Spring, advertising widely locally, with several page adverts in the Melksham News, a social media presence, we also contacted everyone who has ever been in contact in previous consultations or visited an event. In addition, land owners who have their land registered as available with Wiltshire Council have all been contacted. This produced a list of some 90 sites that land owners have put forward to be considered for housing allocation in the next version of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan. National independent company AECOM are now sifting and assessing the individual sites, with a report to follow in the late Autumn which will then lead to the site allocation work by the Housing Task Group who will be shortlisting sites before engaging with land owners. There will be the opportunity for some informal community engagement on the shortlist of sites. The next version of the Plan will include housing site allocations for small and medium sites, whereas the Local Plan being produced by Wiltshire Council will be allocating large, strategic sites.

Running alongside this work, a Housing Needs Assessment has also been undertaken by AECOM for the Neighbourhood Plan area of Melksham Town and Melksham Without; this incorporates the local Housing Needs Survey that was undertaken by ourselves and advertised at the last Area Board meeting in June. This looks at the type and tenure of the housing mix requirements in the area, and is the evidence for housing mix policy in the reviewed Plan; ensuring that future housing meets the needs of local people. Thankyou to the 136 local residents who responded to the Local Housing Needs survey in May and June; we are looking at publishing the results shortly.

## Protecting Values Local Green Space

There is the opportunity through the Plan to give a Local Green Space planning designation to protect spaces that are important to the local community. Thank you to those of you that put forward local green spaces that were important due to their

historic significance, their beauty, their recreational value, their richness in wildlife or their tranquillity. This designation can only apply to small, local spaces and not large tracts of land. The volunteer task group is now working through the 50+ sites that the public put forward to ensure that they meet the necessary criteria and eligibility to produce a shortlist, we will then make contact with the local landowners. You can view the sites put forward on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

## Green Gaps Designation

As you may be aware, there has been a recent Appeal Hearing upheld for a site on Semington Road, behind Townsend Farm, for 50 affordable dwellings. One of the things highlighted by the Planning Inspector was the lack of a policy on green gaps, to prevent the coalescence of villages to the town and other villages, and this is being addressed in the review of the Neighbourhood Plan. We are working to secure the appropriate technical support to aid this piece of work, hopefully with AECOM to tie in with other pieces of work, with the aim of consulting the community on this during the assessment period over the next few months.

## Further Addressing Climate Change

A separate task group is working on the broad topic of Climate Issues, including analysis of other Neighbourhood Plans that have recently been examined and adopted to see if there are further policies that can be included in the next version of the Plan, as this is a rapidly changing topic. Policy updates have been drafted with background information to be revised next. The group working on this brief are closely aligned with the Town Council's Environment & Climate Working Group.

## Planning for the future vitality of the town centre

AECOM have also been appointed to look at the Town Centre Master Plan work, and will be taking a holistic, independent approach at the Town Centre, looking at its Economy and Vitality, its Culture and Distinctiveness, its Connections and Accessibility, the quality of its Public Realm, and its Heritage and Townscape; all set against the pressing agenda of Sustainability and Climate Change. There is also the possibility of some Town Centre Regeneration Site opportunities with vacant sites in the town centre, including those recently vacated as part of the Campus project; they may provide identified/allocated housing to meet local needs. This is a fantastic opportunity for some revised town centre policies in the revised Plan, and for a Master Plan to sit alongside the Neighbourhood Plan as a practical separate stand-alone document. AECOM have been fully briefed by the Neighbourhood Plan team and are working with the Town Council and Wiltshire Council on the publicly owned assets aspects.

## Protecting our Local Heritage

Whilst not giving as much protection as the Local Green Spaces, there is still the opportunity to list in the Neighbourhood Plan heritage assets that don't have Listed status but still have an important historical value to the local community. Again, thank you to those of you who responded to this survey. A small group of volunteers is looking at the evidence for these sites, it's a short list but valuable nevertheless, and the next step is to contact landowners. You can view the list of those sites put forward on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

## Strengthening locally distinctive Design Policy

For new housing, and other development, it's not just about where it is, and whether its two or three bedrooms, or rented or for purchase; it's about what it looks like and this is where the Design Codes come in. AECOM have been appointed to do this work, and are looking at what "good design" looks like for the Melksham Plan area and all future planning applications will have to adhere to the Code when the Plan is adopted. From designing out anti-social behaviour, to brick colours, to solar panels, this is all covered in the Design Code. It covers local identity and character, access and movement incorporating the Priority for People work, green and blue infrastructure, sustainability and energy efficiency and the built form. There will be some community engagement on this piece of work as we seek your views.

## Ensuring that Local Priorities are addressed as the proposed Bypass and Melksham Link Canal projects progress

The Neighbourhood Plan is all about planning policy, and to be referred and adhered to when planning applications are considered. There are a couple of proposed large infrastructure projects that are in the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan area and there are separate task groups looking into these projects to ensure that the Plan is reviewed in line with the latest updates on these projects. The Plan will have Priority Statements on these projects, but they will be light touch as the Neighbourhood Plan is not the place for decision making on these projects; and therefore cannot have policies relating to them. Volunteer task groups have met with the project teams on these separate projects to review the current statement with them.

## Who is working on this project?

The Melksham Neighbourhood Plan is a joint project of Melksham Town and Melksham Without Parish Council but is community led, and the Steering Group and

Task Groups are made up from a wide range of volunteers from the community. Planning expertise is provided by Place Studio, who guide us through the process. The group has been successful in obtaining grant funding from the Government to contribute to the costs, and some technical support from AECOM who are also provided by Locality, directly funded by central Government.

## How do I get involved?

Information on the progress on the review of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed on the dedicated website <https://www.melkshamneighbourhoodplan.org/> and dedicated facebook page. You can sign up to the mailing list by contacting any officer at the Town or Parish Council or by clicking the link on the website. If you are not online, please contact either of the councils who can provide written updates. Look out for further consultation and engagement opportunities advertised in the Melksham News too.

**\*\* Neighbourhood Plan - Heritage Task Group update – Councillor G Ellis**

The Heritage Group has been tasked with identifying buildings and other infrastructure architecture such as road furniture or locally valued heritage significance. These assets should be regarded as being in addition to listed building and structures of national significance which already have a protection and number over 200 in the neighbourhood plan area.

The June public survey identified only a handful of additional structures on top of listed building and that's in contrast to hundreds of inputs to the parallel survey using the same techniques and promotion as the open spaces survey which came up with hundreds of candidates.

We have been reviewing candidates against criteria of:

Rarity \* Representativeness \* Architectural Interest \* Townscape Value Group Value \* Artistic Interest \* Historic Association \* Archaeological Interest

“Locally listing a heritage asset does not bring additional consent requirements over and above those already required for planning permission. It can, however, help to inform planning decisions in a way that conserves and enhances local character and identity. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Government’s planning policies for England, the conservation and contribution of locally listed heritage assets is a material consideration in planning decisions that directly affect them, or their setting.”

The LISTING of a building puts significant constraints and duties on the owner which can restrict or limit their use of the property and can add significant expense to the upkeep of their asset and reduce its financial value to them. Adding buildings to the local listing would have a similar effect, though a lesser one, on our extra listings and so, bearing in mind the muted public response and the desire to make the Melksham area a town that develops for the future, the task group will only be recommending a handful of local listings, most of which might be characterised as being buildings, structures, or furniture which fall only just short of national listing. In respect of the owners of those properties we are not publishing a listing prior to the filtering out of assets which do not even make our shortlist.

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From Councillor Goodhind

**Report for Economic Development and Planning Committee Meeting scheduled for 10 October 2022 – Hydroelectric Generation.**

The WSO Partnership have asked whether the Town Council would be interested in possible hydroelectric power generation from the River Avon weir. Hydroelectric generation was included as part of the Melksham Link plan and which would be provided from the new weir included in the plan.

A new weir is now not going to be included in the Melksham Link plan, as it is no longer considered necessary, but technology has moved on and incorporating the ability to generate hydroelectricity in the existing weir is considered even more attractive and not dependent on completion of the Melksham Link. Opportunities for providing sustainable power for vehicle charging in the Bath Road car park at the very least appears feasible and would of course be very newsworthy. The nearest example of hydroelectricity generation I'm aware of is the at Kingston Mills in BOA which I believe was established several years ago. A specialist would need to be commissioned to update details of realistic expectations and costs.

I am asking for the Town Council's confirmation of interest in the project and ideally agreement in principle to consider an element of seed funding, providing the Council is sufficiently convinced of the project's viability from findings so far which would be shared.

**Councillor C Goodhind**

3 October 2022

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